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DISCOUR

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Being and Attributes of GOD

Obligations of Natural Religion

AND THE
TRUTH AND CERTAINTY

OF THE
CHRISTIAN REVELATION

In Answer to Mr. HENRY BRIDGES, the Minister of the Gospel of
London, and other Doctors of National and Revealed Religion,
writing against the Christian Religion, in the Christian's Own
of St. Paul, in the Year 1794, and 1795, at the Instance
of the Honorable ROBERT BOLLER, Esq.

By J. J. CLARK, D.D.

Author of the Christian's Own

and the Christian's Own

and the Christian's Own

Discovered by the Christian's Own

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A
DEMONSTRATION
OF THE
BEING and ATTRIBUTES
OF
G O D:

More particularly in Answer to
Mr. HOBBS, SPINOZA,
And their Followers.

Wherein the Notion of *LIBERTY* is Stated, and the Possibility and Certainty of it Proved, in Opposition to *Necessity* and *Fate*.

Being the Substance of Eight SERMONS, Preached in the Cathedral-Church of *St. Paul*, in the Year 1704, at the Lecture founded by the Honourable *ROBERT BOYLE*, Esq;

By *SAMUEL CLARKE*, D. D.
Rector of *St. James's, Westminster*.

The TENTH EDITION, Corrected.

Rom. i. 20. *For the Invisible Things of Him from the Creation of the World are clearly seen, being understood by the Things that are made; even his Eternal Power and God-head: So that they are without Excuse.*

G. M. Algower

L O N D O N:

printed for *H. Woodfall, J. Beecroft, W. Strahan, J. Rivington, R. Baldwin, L. Hawes, W. Clarke, and R. Collins, R. Horsfield, W. Johnston, B. Law, and T. Davies.*

MDCCLXVII.

DEMONSTRATION

OF THE

BEING AND ATTRIBUTES

OF

GOD

More particularly in Answer to

Mr. Hobbs's Sermons,

And their Followers.

Wherein the Notion of A N E T is stated, and the Possibi-

lity of the Substance of Right SERMONS, Preached in the
Church of Christ of St. Paul, in the Year 1704, at the Instance
of the Honorable ROBERT BOYLE, Esq.

By SAMUEL CLARK, D. D.

Rector of St. James's, Westminster.

The Tenth Edition, Corrected.

From the original Manuscript of the Author, and the Edition of
the Fifth and Sixth Parts, being corrected by the Author, and
added to the Second Edition, and God bless: So that they are
now complete.

L O N D O N

Printed by W. Stansfeld, J. Baskin, W. Baskin, J. Baskin,
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and W. Baskin, J. Baskin, and T. Baskin.

MDCCLXXII

T O T H E

Most Reverend Father in God

T H O M A S

Lord Archbishop of *Canterbury*,
and Primate of all *England*;

Sir H E N R Y A S H U R S T,
Baronet;

Sir J O H N R O T H E R A M,
Knight, Serjeant at Law;

J O H N E V E L I N, *Esquire*;

T R U S T E E S

Appointed by the

Hon. R O B E R T B O Y L E, *Esquire*;

This D I S C O U R S E

Is humbly Dedicated.

TO THE

Most Reverend Father in God

THOMAS

Lord Archbishop of Canterbury
and Primate of all England;

Sir HENRY ASHURST,
Baronet;

Sir JOHN ROTHAM,
Knight, Sergeant at Law;

JOHN EVELIN, Esquire;

TRUSTEES

Appointed by the

Hon. ROBERT BOYLE, Esquire;

for DISCOURSE

A Poem Dedicated.

T H E

P R E F A C E.

THERE being already published many and good Books, to prove the Being and Attributes of God; I have chosen to contract what was requisite for me to say, upon this Subject, into as narrow a Compass, and to express what I had to offer, in as few Words, as I could with Perspicuity. For which Reason I have also confined myself to One only Method or continued Thrcad of Arguing; which I have endeavoured shuld be as near to Mathematical, as the Nature of such a Discourse would allow: Omitting some other Arguments, which I could not discern to be so evidently conclusive: Because it seems not to be at any Time for the real Advantage of Truth to use Arguments in its Behalf founded

The P R E F A C E.

only on such Hypotheses, as the Adversaries apprehend they cannot be compelled to grant. Yet I have not made it my Business to oppose any of those Arguments, because I think it is not the best Way for any one to recommend his own Performance, by endeavouring to discover the Imperfections of Others who are engaged in the same Design with himself, of Promoting the Interest of true Religion and Virtue. But every Man ought to use such Arguments only, as appear to Him to be clear and strong; and the Readers must judge whether they truly prove the Conclusion.



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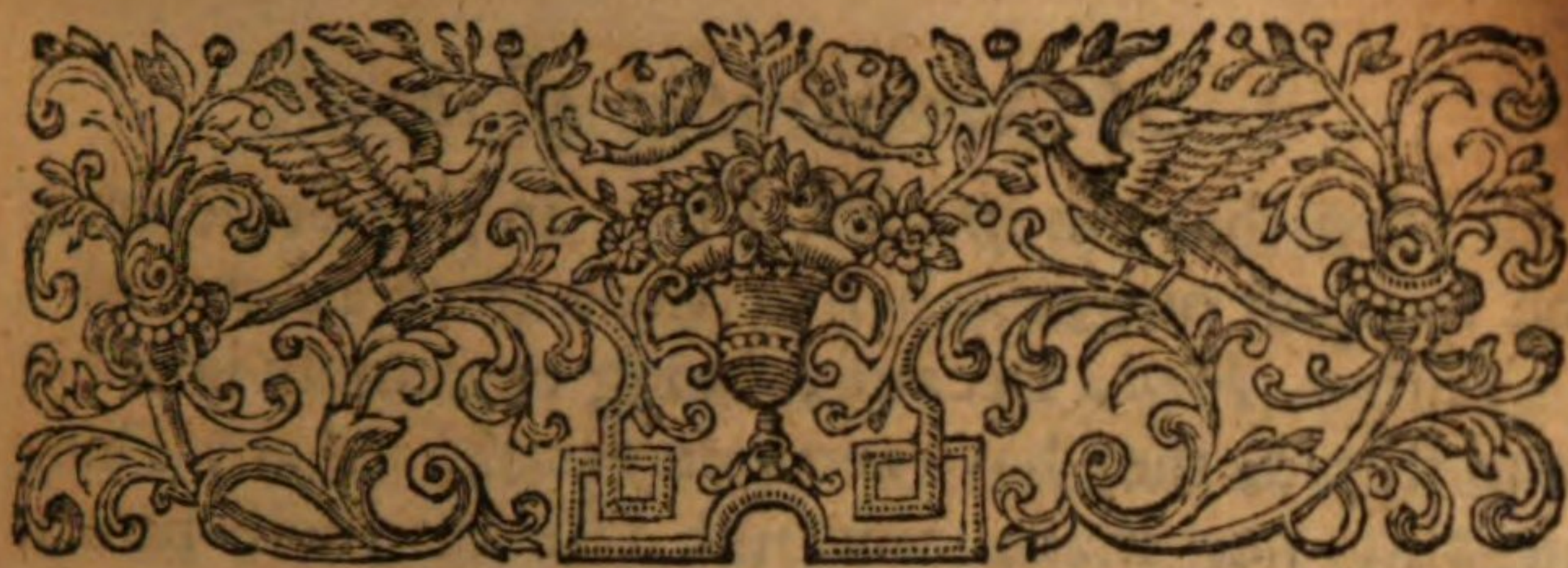
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A
DEMONSTRATION
OF THE
BEING and ATTRIBUTES
OF
G O D.

More particularly in ANSWER
to Mr. *Hobbs*, *Spinoza*, and their
Followers.



ALL those who either are, or pretend to be *Atheists*; who either disbelieve the Being of God, or would be thought to do so; or, (which is all one,) who deny the Principal Attributes of the Divine Nature, and suppose God to be an Unintelligent Being, which acts merely by Necessity; that is, which, in any tolerable Propriety of Speech, acts not at all, but is only acted upon:

B

All

*The Intro-
duction.*

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All Men that are *Atheists*, I say, in this Sense, must be so upon one or other of these three Accounts.

Atheism arises from stupid Ignorance :

Either, *First*, Because, being extremely ignorant and stupid, they have *never duly considered* any Thing at all ; nor made any just Use of their natural Reason, to discover even the plainest and most obvious Truths ; but have spent their Time in a Manner of Life very little Superior to that of Beasts.

Or from gross Corruption of Manners :

Or, *Secondly*, Because, being totally debauched and corrupted in their *Practice*, they have, by a vicious and degenerate Life, corrupted the Principles of their Nature, and defaced the Reason of their own Minds ; and, instead of fairly and impartially inquiring into the Rules and Obligations of Nature, and the Reason and Fitness of Things, have accustomed themselves only to mock and scoff at Religion ; and, being under the Power of Evil Habits, and the Slavery of Unreasonable and Indulged Lusts, are resolved not to hearken to any Reasoning which would oblige them to forsake their beloved Vices.

Or from false Philosophy.

Or, *Thirdly*, Because in the way of *Speculative Reasoning*, and upon the Principles of Philosophy, they pretend that the Arguments used Against the Being or Attributes of God, seem to them, after the strictest and fullest Inquiry, to be more strong and conclusive, than those by which we endeavour to prove these great Truths.

These seem the only Causes that can be imagined, of any Man's disbelieving the Being or Attributes of God ; and no Man can be supposed to be an Atheist, but upon one or other of these three Accounts. Now to the *two former* of these three Sorts of Men ; namely, to such as are wholly ignorant and stupid, or to such as through habitual Debauchery have brought themselves to a Custom of mocking and scoffing at all Religion, and will not hearken to any fair Reasoning ; it is *not* my *present* Business

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Business to apply myself. The One of these wants to be instructed in the first Principles of *Reason*, as well as of *Religion*; The Other disbelieves only for a present false *Interest*, and because he is desirous that the Thing should not be true. The One has *not yet arrived to* the Use of his natural Faculties; The Other has *renounced* them; and declares he will not be argued with, as a rational Creature. 'Tis therefore the *third Sort* of Atheists only, (namely, those who in the way of Speculative *Reasoning*, and upon the Principles of Philosophy, pretend that the Arguments brought Against the Being or Attributes of God, do, upon the strictest and fullest Examination, appear to them to be more strong and conclusive, than those by which these great Truths are attempted to be proved;) These, I say, are the only Atheistical Persons, to whom my present Discourse can be supposed to be directed, or indeed who are capable of being reasoned with at all.

Now, before I enter upon the main Argument, I shall premise several *Concessions*, which these Men, upon their own Principles, are unavoidably *obliged* to make.

And, *First*, They must of Necessity own, that, *The Being* supposing it cannot be proved to be true, yet at least *of God very Desirable*, 'tis a Thing very *Desirable*, and which any wise Man would wish to be true, for the great Benefit and Happiness of Men; that there was a God, an Intelligent and Wise, a Just and Good Being, to Govern the World. Whatever Hypothesis these Men can possibly frame; whatever Argument they can invent, by which they would exclude God and Providence out of the World; That very Argument or Hypothesis, will of Necessity lead them to this *Concession*. If they argue, that our Notion of God arises not from Nature and Reason, but from the Art and Contrivance of *Politicians*; That Argument itself forces them to confess, that 'tis manifestly for the Interest

A Demonstration of the

of Human Society, that it should be believed there is a God. If they suppose that the World was made by *Chance*, and is every Moment subject to be destroyed by Chance again; no Man can be so absurd as to contend, that 'tis as comfortable and desirable to live in such an uncertain State of Things, and

* *Maria ac Terras Cœlumq;—
Una dies dabit exitio, multosq;
per annos*

Sustentata ruet moles & machina Mundi.

—— *Dictis dabit ipsa fidem
res*

*Forfitan, & graviter terrarum
motibus orbis*

*Omnia conquassari in parvo
tempore cernes.*

Lucret. Lib. 5.

* so continually liable to Ruin, without any Hope of Renovation; as in a World that were under the Preservation and Conduct of a Powerful, Wise, and Good God. If they argue against the Being of God, from the *Faults* and Defects which they imagine they can find in the Frame and Constitution of the *Visible* and *Material* World; this Supposition obliges them to acknowledge,

that it would have been better the World had been made by an Intelligent and Wise Being, who might have prevented all Faults and Imperfections. If they argue against Providence, from the Faultiness and Inequality which they think they discover in the Management of the *Moral* World; this is a plain Confession, that 'tis a Thing more fit and desirable in itself, that the World should be governed by a Just and Good Being, than by mere Chance or Unintelligent Necessity. Lastly, if they suppose the World to be Eternally and Necessarily *Self-Existent*; and consequently that every Thing in it is established by a Blind and Eternal Fatality; no rational Man can at the same Time deny, but that Liberty and Choice, or a Free Power of Acting, is a more eligible State, than to be determined thus in all our Actions, as a Stone is to move downward, by an absolute and inevitable Fate. In a Word, which Way soever they turn themselves, and whatever Hypothesis they make, concerning the
Original

Being and Attributes of G O D.

Original and Frame of Things ; Nothing is so certain and undeniable, as that *Man*, considered without the Protection and Conduct of a Superior Being, is in a far worse Case ; than upon Supposition of the Being and Government of God, and of Mens being under his peculiar Conduct, **Protection**, and Favour. Man, of himself, is infinitely insufficient for his own Happiness : * *He is liable to many Evils and Miseries, which he can neither prevent nor redress : He is full of Wants which he cannot supply, and compassed about with Infirmities which he cannot remove, and obnoxious to Dangers which he can never sufficiently provide against : He is secure of Nothing that he enjoys in this World, and uncertain of every Thing that he hopes for : He is apt to grieve for what he cannot help, and eagerly to desire what he is never likely to obtain, &c.* Under which evil Circumstances, 'tis manifest there can be no sufficient Support, but in the Belief of a Wise and Good God, and in the Hopes which true Religion affords. Whether therefore the Being and Attributes of God can be *demonstrated*, or not ; it must at least be confessed by all rational and wise Men, to be a Thing very *Desirable*, and which they would heartily *Wish* to be true, that there was a God, an Intelligent and Wise, a Just and Good Being, to Govern the World.

Now the Use I desire to make of this Concession, is only this : That since the Men I am arguing with, are unavoidably obliged to confess, that 'tis a Thing very *Desirable at least*, that there should be a God ; they must of Necessity, upon their own Principles, be very willing, nay, desirous above all Things, to be convinced that their present Opinion is an Error, and sincerely hope that the contrary may be demonstrated to them to be true ; And consequently they are bound with all Seriousness, Attention, and Impartiality, to consider the Weight of

A Demonstration of the

the Arguments, by which the Being and Attributes of God may be proved to them.

Scoffing at Religion inexcusable.

Secondly, All such Persons as I am speaking of, who profess themselves to be Atheists, not upon any present Interest or Lust, but purely upon the Principles of Reason and Philosophy; are bound by these Principles to acknowledge, that all *mocking* and *scoffing* at Religion, all jesting and turning Arguments of Reason into Drollery and Ridicule, is the most unmanly and unreasonable Thing in the World. And consequently they are obliged to exclude out of their Number, as Irrational and Self-condemned Persons, and unworthy to be argued with, all such Scoffers at Religion, who deride at all Adventures without hearing Reason; and who will not use the Means of being convinced and satisfied. Hearing the Reason of the Case with Patience and Unprejudicedness, is an Equity which Men owe to every *Truth* that can in any Manner concern them; and which is necessary to the Discovery of *every Kind of Error*. How much more in Things of the utmost Importance!

Virtue and good Manners absolutely necessary.

Thirdly, Since the Persons I am discoursing to, cannot but own, that the Supposition of the Being of God, is in itself most desirable, and for the Benefit of the World, that it should be true; They must of Necessity grant further, that, supposing the Being and Attributes of God to be Things not indeed Demonstrable to be true, but only *Possible*, and such as cannot be demonstrated to be false; as most certainly they cannot: And much more, supposing them once made to appear *Probable*, and but more likely to be true than the contrary Opinion: Nothing is more evident, even upon these Suppositions only, than that Men ought in all Reason to live *piously* and *virtuously* in the World; and that Vice and Immorality are, upon all Accounts, and under

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under all Hypotheses, the most absurd and inexcusable Things in Nature.

Thus much being premised, which no Atheist who pretends to be a rational and fair Inquirer into Things, can possibly avoid granting; (and other Atheists, I have before said, are not to be disputed with at all; as being Enemies to *Reason*, no less than to *Religion*, and therefore absolutely Self-condemned :) I proceed now to the main Thing I at first proposed; namely, to endeavour to shew, to such considering Persons as I have already described, that the Being and Attributes of God are not only possible or barely probable in themselves, but also strictly *demonstrable* to any unprejudiced Mind, from the most uncontestable Principles of Right Reason.

And here, because the Persons I am at present dealing with, must be supposed not to believe any Revelation, nor acknowledge any Authority which they will submit to, but only the bare Force of Reasoning: I shall not, at this Time, draw any Testimony from Scripture, nor make use of any Sort of Authority, nor lay any Stress upon any popular Arguments in the Matter before us; but confine myself to the Rules of strict and demonstrative Argumentation.

Now Many Arguments there are, by which the Being and Attributes of God have been undertaken to be *Demonstrated*. And perhaps most of those Arguments, if thoroughly understood, rightly stated, fully pursued, and duly separated from the false or uncertain Reasonings, which have sometimes been intermixed with them; would at length appear to be substantial and conclusive. But because I would endeavour, as far as possible, to avoid all Manner of Perplexity and Confusion; therefore I shall not at this Time use any Variety of Arguments, but endeavour, by One clear and plain Series of

A Demonstration of the

Propositions, necessarily connected and following one from another, to demonstrate the Certainty of the Being of God, and to deduce in Order the Necessary Attributes of his Nature, so far as, by our Finite Reason, we are enabled to discover and apprehend them. And because it is not to my present Purpose to explain or illustrate Things to Them that Believe, but only to convince Unbelievers, and settle Them that Doubt, by strict and undeniable Reasoning; therefore I shall not alledge any Thing, which, however really true and useful, may yet be liable to Contradiction or Dispute; but shall endeavour to urge Such Propositions only, as cannot be denied without departing from that Reason, which all Atheists pretend to be the Foundation of their Unbelief. Only it is absolutely Necessary, before all Things, that they consent to lay aside all Manner of *Prejudices*; and especially such, as have been apt to arise from the too frequent Use of *Terms of Art*, which have no *Ideas* belonging to them; and from the common receiving certain *Maxims of Philosophy* as true, which at the Bottom seem to be only *Propositions without any Meaning or Signification at all*.

*Something
must have
Existed
from Eternity.*

I. First then, it is Absolutely and Undeniably certain, that *Something has Existed from all Eternity*. This is so Evident and Undeniable a Proposition, that no Atheist in any Age has ever presumed to assert the contrary; and therefore there is little Need of being particular in the Proof of it. For, since Something now Is, 'tis manifest that Something always Was: Otherwise the Things that Now Are, must have been produced out of Nothing, absolutely and without Cause: Which is a plain Contradiction in Terms. For, to say a Thing is *produced*, and yet that there is no *Cause* at all of that Production, is to say that Something is *Effected*, when it is *Effected*.

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Effected by Nothing; that is, at the same Time when it is *not Effected at all*. Whatever Exists, has a Cause, a Reason, a Ground of its Existence; (a Foundation on which its Existence relies; a Ground or Reason why it doth *Exist*, rather than *not Exist*;) either in the Necessity of its own Nature, and then it must have been *of itself Eternal*: Or in the Will of some Other Being; and then That Other Being must, at least in the Order of Nature and Causality, have Existed before it.

That *Something* therefore *has really Existed from* *Of the Difficulty of Conceiving Eternity.* *Eternity*, is one of the certainest and most evident Truths in the World; acknowledged by all Men, and disputed by none. Yet as to the *Manner* how it can be; there is nothing in Nature more difficult for the Mind of Man to conceive, than this very first Plain and Self-evident Truth. For, *How any Thing can have Existed Eternally*; that is, *How an Eternal Duration can be now actually Past*; is a Thing utterly as impossible for our narrow Understandings to comprehend, as any Thing that is not an express Contradiction can be imagined to be: And yet to deny the Truth of the Proposition, that *an Eternal Duration is now actually Past*; would be to assert *something still far more Unintelligible*, even a *real and express Contradiction*.

The Use I would make of this Observation, is *Difficulties arising merely from the Nature of Eternity, not to be regarded, because equal in all Suppositions.* This. That since in all Questions concerning the Nature and Perfections of God, or concerning any Thing to which the Idea of Eternity or Infinity is joined; tho' we can indeed Demonstrate certain Propositions to be true, yet 'tis impossible for us to comprehend or frame any adequate or compleat Ideas of the *Manner how* the Things so demonstrated can Be: Therefore when once any Proposition is clearly demonstrated to be true; it ought not to disturb us, that there be perhaps perplexing Difficulties on the other Side, which, merely for want of

A Demonstration of the

of adequate Ideas of the *Manner* of the Existence of the Things demonstrated, are not easy to be cleared. Indeed, were it possible there should be any Proposition which could equally be *Demonstrated* on *both Sides* of the Question, or which could on *both Sides* be *reduced to imply a Contradiction*; (as some have very inconsiderately asserted;) This, it must be confessed, would alter the Case. Upon This absurd Supposition, all Difference of True and False, all Thinking and Reasoning, and the Use of all our Faculties, would be entirely at an End. But when to Demonstration on the one Side, there are opposed on the other, only Difficulties raised from our want of having adequate Ideas of the Things themselves; this ought not to be esteemed an Objection of any real Weight. 'Tis directly and clearly *Demonstrable*, that *Something has been from Eternity*: All the Objections therefore raised against the Eternity of any Thing, grounded merely on our want of having an adequate Idea of Eternity; ought to be looked upon as of no real Solidity. Thus in other the like Instances; 'Tis *Demonstrable*, for Example, that *Something must be actually Infinite*: All the Metaphysical Difficulties therefore, which arise usually from applying the Measures and Relations of Things Finite, to what is Infinite; and from supposing *Finities* to be [Aliquot] *Parts of Infinite*, when indeed they are not properly so, but only as Mathematical Points to Quantity, which have no Proportion at all: (and from imagining All *Infinities* to be *Equal*, when in Things *disparate* they manifestly are *not* so; an *infinite Line* being not only *not equal to*, but *infinitely less* than an *infinite Surface*, and an *infinite Surface* than *Space infinite in all Dimensions*;) All Metaphysical Difficulties, I say, arising from false Suppositions of this Kind, ought to be esteemed vain and of no Force. Again: 'Tis in like Manner *Demonstrable*, that *Quantity is infinitely Divisible*;
All

Being and Attributes of GOD.

All the Objections therefore raised, by supposing the *Sums total of all Infinites* to be *Equal*, when in *disparate Parts* they manifestly are *not* so; and by comparing the imaginary *Equality* or *Inequality* of the *Number* of the *Parts* of *Unequal Quantities*, whose *Parts* have really *no Number at all*, they all having *Parts* without *Number*; ought to be looked upon as weak and altogether inconclusive: To ask whether the *Parts* of *Unequal Quantities* be *equal in Number* or not, when they have *No Number at all*; being the same Thing as to ask whether two *Lines* drawn from differently distant *Points*, and each of them continued infinitely, be *equal in Length* or not, that is, whether they *End* together, when neither of them have *any End at all*.

II. *There has Existed from Eternity, * Some One There must Unchangeable and Independent Being.* For since ^{have Exist-} Something must needs have been from ^{ed from E-} Eternity; ^{ternity One} as has been already proved, and is granted on all ^{Independent} Hands: Either there has always Existed ^{Being.} Some

One Unchangeable and *Independent* Being, from which all other Beings that are or ever were in the Universe, have received their Original; or else there has been an infinite Succession of changeable and *dependent* Beings produced one from another in an endless Progression, *without* any Original Cause at all.

Now this latter Supposition is so very absurd, that tho' all Atheism must in its Account of most Things (as shall be shewn hereafter) terminate in it, yet I think very few Atheists ever were so weak as openly and directly to defend it. For it is plainly impossible, and *contradictory* to itself. I shall not argue against it from the *supposed* Impossibility of Infinite Succession, *barely and absolutely considered*

** The Meaning of this Proposition, (and All that the Argument here requires,) is, that there must needs have Always been Some Independent Being, Some One at least. To shew that there can be no More than One, is not the Design of this Proposition, but of the Seventh.*

A Demonstration of the

considered in itself; for a Reason which shall be mentioned hereafter. But, if we consider such an Infinite Progression, as *One entire Endless Series of Dependent Beings*; 'tis plain this *whole Series of Beings* can have no Cause *from without*, of its Existence; because in it are supposed to be included *all Things* that are or ever were in the Universe: And 'tis plain it can have no Reason *within itself*, of its Existence; because no one Being in this Infinite Succession is supposed to be Self-Existent or *Necessary*, (which is the only Ground or Reason of Existence of any Thing, that can be imagined *within the Thing itself*, as will presently more fully appear,) but every one *Dependent* on the foregoing: And where *no Part* is *Necessary*, 'tis manifest *the Whole* cannot be *Necessary*; Absolute Necessity of Existence not being an *extrinsic, relative, and accidental* Denomination; but an *inward and essential* Property of the Nature of the Thing which so Exists. An Infinite Succession therefore of merely *Dependent* Beings, without any Original Independent Cause; is a *Series* of Beings, that has neither Necessity, nor Cause, nor any Reason or Ground *at all* of its Existence, either *within itself* or *from without*: That is, 'tis an express Contradiction and Impossibility; 'tis a supposing *Something* to be *caused*, (because 'tis granted in every one of its Stages of Succession, *not* to be *Necessarily* and *of itself*;) and yet that, in the Whole, 'tis caused *absolutely by Nothing*. Which every Man knows is a Contradiction to imagine done *in Time*; and, because Duration in this Case makes no Difference, 'tis equally a Contradiction to suppose it done *from Eternity*. And consequently there must, *on the contrary*, of Necessity have Existed from Eternity, *Some One* Immutable and *Independent* Being.

To suppose an *Infinite Succession* of changeable and *dependent* Beings produced one from another in an endless Progression, *without* any Original Cause
at

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at all, * is only a driving back from one Step to another, and (as it were) removing out of Sight, the Question concerning the Ground or Reason of the Existence of Things. 'Tis in Reality, and in point of Argument, the very same Supposition, as it would be to suppose *One continued Being*, of *beginningless* and *endless* Duration, neither Self-Existent and Necessary in itself, nor having its Existence founded in Any Self-Existent Cause. Which is directly absurd and contradictory.

Otherwise, thus. Either there has always Existed Some One Unchangeable and *Independent* Being, from which all other Beings have received their Original; or else there has been an Infinite Succession of changeable and *dependent* Beings, produced one from another in an endless Progression, without any Original Cause at all. According to this latter Supposition, there is Nothing in the Universe Self-Existent or Necessarily-Existing. And if so; then it was originally *equally possible*, that from Eternity there should never have Existed any Thing at all; as that there should from Eternity have Existed a Succession of changeable and dependent Beings. Which being supposed; then, *What* is it that has from Eternity

* This Matter has *since* well illustrated, by a late Δ Writer. "Suppose a Chain
"hung down out of the Heavens,
"from an Unknown Height;
"and, though Every Link of it
"gravitated toward the Earth,
"and what it hung upon was
"not visible, yet it did not descend, but kept its Situation:
"And, upon This, a Question
"should arise, What supported
"or kept up this Chain? Would
"it be a sufficient Answer, to
"say, that the First or Lowest
"Link hung upon the Second,
"or That next above it; the
"Second, or rather the First
"and Second together, upon
"the Third; and so on in infinitum? For, What holds
"up the Whole? A Chain of
"Ten Links would fall down;
"unless Something, able to bear
"it, hindered. One of Twenty;
"if not stayed by Something of
"a yet Greater Strength, in
"Proportion to the Increase of
"Weight. And therefore One
"of infinite Links, certainly;
"if not sustained by Something
"infinitely strong, and capable
"to bear up an infinite Weight.
"And Thus it is in a Chain of
"Causes and Effects; tending,
"or (as it were) gravitating
"towards some End. The Last,
"or Lowest, depends, or (as one
"may say) is suspended upon
"the Cause above it. This
"again, if it be not the First
"Cause, is suspended, as an
"Effect, upon Something above
"it, &c. And if they should be
"infinite; unless (agreeably to
"what has been said) there is
"some Cause, upon which All
"hang or depend; they would
"be

A Demonstration of the

but an infinite Effect, without an Efficient. And to assert there is any such Thing, would be as great an Absurdity as to say, that a finite or little Weight wants Something to sustain it, but an Infinite one (or the Greatest) does not."

Religion of Nature delineated, pag. 67.

Eternity determined such a Succession of Beings to Exist, rather than that from Eternity there should never have Existed any Thing at all? *Necessity* it was not; because it was equally possible, in this Supposition, that they should not have Existed at all. *Chance*, is nothing but a mere Word, without any Signification.

And *Other Being* 'tis supposed there was none, to determine the Existence of these. Their Existence therefore was determined by *Nothing*; neither by any *Necessity* in the Nature of the Things themselves, because 'tis supposed that none of them are Self-Existent; nor by any other Being, because no other is supposed to Exist. That is to say; Of two *equally possible* Things, (*viz.* whether *any Thing* or *Nothing* should from Eternity have Existed,) the one is determined, rather than the other, *absolutely by Nothing*: Which is an express Contradiction. And consequently, as before, there must on the contrary, of *Necessity* have Existed from Eternity, *Some One* Immutable and *Independent* Being. Which, *what it is*, remains in the next Place to be inquired.

The One Independent Being, must be Necessarily Existing.

III. *That Unchangeable and Independent Being, which has Existed from Eternity, without any External Cause of its Existence; must be Self-Existent, that is, Necessarily-Existing.* For whatever Exists, must either have come into Being out of Nothing, absolutely without Cause; or it must have been produced by some External Cause; or it must be Self-Existent. Now to arise out of Nothing, absolutely without any Cause; has been already shewn to be a plain Contradiction. To have been produced by some External Cause, cannot possibly be true of every Thing; but Something must have Existed Eternally and

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and Independently ; As has likewise been shewn already. It remains therefore, that That Being, which has Existed Independently from Eternity, must of Necessity be Self-Existent. Now to be *Self-Existent*, is not to be *Produced by itself* ; for That is an exprefs Contradiction. But it is, (which is the only Idea we can frame of Self-Existence ; and, without which, the Word seems to have no Signification at all :) It is, I say, to *Exist by an Absolute Necessity originally in the Nature of the Thing itself*. And this Necessity, must be *Antecedent* ; not indeed in Time, to the Existence of the Being itself ; because That is Eternal : But it must be *Antecedent*, in the Natural Order of our Ideas, to our *Supposition* of its Being. That is ; This Necessity must not barely be *consequent* upon our Supposition of the Existence of such a Being ; (For then it would not be a Necessity *Absolutely* such in itself, nor be the Ground or Foundation of the Existence of any Thing ; being, on the contrary, only a Consequent of it ;) But it must *antecedently* force itself upon us, whether we will or no, even when we are endeavouring to suppose that no such Being Exists. For Example : When we are endeavouring to suppose, that there is *no Being* in the Universe that Exists Necessarily ; we always find in our Minds, (besides the foregoing Demonstration of Something being Self-Existent, from the *Impossibility of every Thing's* page 11, *being dependent* ;) We always find in our Minds, &c. I say, some Ideas, as of *Infinity* and *Eternity* ; which to remove, that is, to suppose that there is no Being, no Substance in the Universe, to which these Attributes or Modes of Existence are necessarily inherent, is a Contradiction in the very Terms. For Modes and Attributes exist only by the Existence of the Substance to which they belong. Now he that can suppose Eternity and Immensity (and consequently the Substance by whose Existence these Modes or

Attributes

A Demonstration of the

Attributes exist,) removed out of the Universe; may, if he please, as easily remove the Relation of Equality between twice Two and Four.

That to suppose *Immensify* removed out of the Universe, or not Necessarily *Eternal*, is an *express Contradiction*; is intuitively evident to every one who attends to his own Ideas, and considers the Essential

Nature of Things. To suppose

* Moveantur Partes Spatii
de Locis suis, & movebuntur
(ut ita dicam) de Seipsis.

Newton. Princip. Lib. I. Schol.
ad Definit. 8.

* any Part of Space removed, is to suppose it removed from and out of Itself: And to suppose the Whole to be taken away, is supposing it to be taken away from itself,

that is, to be taken away while it still remains: Which is a *Contradiction in Terms*. There is no Obscurity in This Argument, but what arises to those who think *Immense Space* to be absolutely *Nothing*. Which Notion, is itself likewise an *express Contradiction*. For *Nothing*, is That which has *No Properties or Modes whatsoever*. That is to say; 'tis That of which *Nothing can truly be affirmed*, and of which *Every Thing can truly be denied*. Which is not the Case of *Immensify* or *Space*.

From this *Third Proposition* it follows,

The true
Notion of
Self-Exist-
ence.

page 11 &
14.

1st. That the only true Idea of a Self-Existent or Necessarily-Existing Being, is the Idea of a Being, the Supposition of whose Not-Existing is an *express Contradiction*. For since 'tis absolutely impossible but there must be Somewhat Self-Existent; that is, which Exists by the Necessity of its own Nature; 'Tis plain that *That Necessity* cannot be a Necessity consequent upon any foregoing Supposition, (because Nothing can be Antecedent to that which is Self-Existent; no, not its own *Will*, so as to be the Cause or Ground of its own Existence,) but it must be a Necessity *absolutely such* in its own Nature. Now a Necessity, not *relatively* or *consequentially*, but *absolutely such* in its own Nature; is nothing else, but its being a plain

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Puto implicare Contradictionem, ut Mundus sit Finitus : i. e. *I think it implies a Contradiction, for the World to be Finite.* Cartes. Epist. 69. Primæ Partis

And his Follower Mr. Regis, Mais peut etre (saith he) que je raisonne mal, &c. i. e. But perhaps I argue ill, when I conclude that the Property my Idea hath to represent Extension,

[that is, in the Sense of the Cartesians, Matter] comes from Extension itself, as its Cause. For, What hinders me from believing that, if this Property comes not from myself, yet at least it may come from some Spirit [or Being] Superior to me, which produces in me the Idea of Extension; though Extension does not actually Exist? Yet when I consider the Thing attentively, I find that my Conclusion is good; and that no Spirit, [or Being] how

excellent soever, can cause the Idea which I have of Extension to represent to me Extension rather than any Thing else, if Extension does not actually Exist; Because, if he should do so, the Idea which I should then have of Extension, would not be a Representation of Extension, but a Representation of Nothing. Which is impossible.

But it may be I still deceive myself, when I say that the Idea I have of Extension, supposes an Object actually Existing. For it seems that I have Ideas, which do not suppose any Object: I have, for Example, the Idea of an Enchanted Castle; though no such Thing really Exists. Yet when I consider the Difficulty still more attentively; I find there is this Difference between the Idea of Extension, and that of an Enchanted Castle; that the first being natural, that is, independent on my Will, supposes an Object which is necessarily such as it represents; whereas the other, being artificial, supposes indeed an Object, but 'tis not necessary that That Object be absolutely such as the Idea represents, because my Will can add to that Object, or diminish from it, as it pleases; as I have before said, and as shall be proved hereafter, when I come to treat of the Origin of Ideas. Regis Metaphys. Lib. I. Par. 1. Cap. 3.

Absurdity, of asserting Matter to be a Necessary Being; than been able to remove out of their Minds the Idea of Immensity, as Existing Necessarily and inseparably from Eternity. Which Absurdity and inextricable Perplexity of theirs, in respect of the Idea of Immensity, shews that they found That indeed to be Necessary, and impossible to be removed; But, in respect of Matter, 'twas only a perverse applying an Idea to an Object whereto it no ways belongs. For, that 'tis indeed absolutely impossible and contradictory to suppose Matter Necessarily-Existing, shall be demonstrated presently.*

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2dly. From hence it follows, that *there is no* ^{Negative} *Man whatsoever, who makes any Use of his Reason,* ^{certain, as} *but may easily become more certain of the Being of a* ^{the Exist-} *Supreme Independent Cause, than he can be of any* ^{ence of a} *Thing else besides his own Existence.* For how much ^{Supreme} *Thought soever it may require to demonstrate the* ^{Independ-} *Other Attributes of such a Being, as it may do to* ^{ent Cause.} *demonstrate the greatest Mathematical Certainties;* (of which more hereafter :) Yet, as to its *Existence*; that there *Is* somewhat Eternal, Infinite, and Self-Existing, which must be the Cause and Original of all other Things; this is one of the First and most natural Conclusions, that any Man, who thinks at all, can frame in his Mind: And no Man can any more doubt of this, than he can doubt whether twice Two be equal to Four. 'Tis possible indeed a Man may in some Sense be *ignorant* of this first and plain Truth, by being utterly stupid, and not thinking at all: (For, though it is absolutely impossible for him to imagine the contrary, yet he may possibly neglect to conceive this: Tho' no Man can possibly Think that twice Two is not Four, yet he may possibly be stupid, and never have thought at all whether it be so or not.) But this I say: There is no Man, who thinks or reasons at all, but may easily become more certain, that there is Something Eternal, Infinite, and Self-Existing; than he can be certain of any Thing else.

3dly. Hence we may observe, that Our first Cer- ^{Of the Idea} *tainty of the Existence of God does not arise from this,* ^{of God, in-} *that in the Idea our Minds frame of him (or rather* ^{cluding} *in the Definition that we make of the Word, God,* ^{Self-Ex-} *as signifying a Being of all possible Perfections) we in-* ^{istence.} *clude Self-Existence: But from hence, that 'tis demon-* *strable both negatively, that neither can All Things* *possibly have arisen out of Nothing, nor can they have* *depended one on another in an endless Succession; and* *also positively, that there is Something in the Universe,*
C 2 actually

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Put actually Existing without us, *the Supposition of whose Not-Existing plainly implies a Contradiction.* The Argument which has by Some been drawn from our including Self-Existence in the *Idea* of God, or our comprehending it in the *Definition* or *Notion* we frame of him; has *This* Obscurity and *Defect* in it; that it seems to extend only to the *Nominal Idea* or *mere Definition* of a Self-Existent Being, and does not with a sufficiently evident Connexion refer and apply That *general Nominal Idea, Definition, or Notion* which we frame *in our own Mind*, to any *Real* particular Being *actually Existing without us.* For 'tis not Satisfactory, that I have in my Mind an Idea of the *Proposition; There Exists a Being indued with all possible Perfections; Or, There is a Self-Existent Being.* But I *must* also have some Idea of the *Thing.* I must have an Idea of Something actually Existing without me. And I must see wherein consists the Absolute Impossibility of removing that Idea, and consequently of supposing the Non-Existence of the Thing; before I can be satisfied from that Idea, that the Thing actually Exists. The bare having an Idea of the Proposition, *There is a Self-Existent Being,* proves indeed the Thing not to be impossible; (For of an impossible Proposition there can be no Idea;) But that it actually Is, cannot be proved from the Idea; unless the *Certainty* of the Actual Existence of a Necessarily-Existing Being follows from the *Possibility* of the Existence of such a Being: Which that it does in this particular Case, many Learned Men have indeed thought; and their subtle Arguings upon this Head are sufficient to raise a Cloud not very easy to be seen through. But it is a much *Clearer* and *more Convincing* way of Arguing, to demonstrate that there does actually Exist without us a Being, whose Existence is Necessary and of itself, by shewing the manifest Contradiction contained in the contrary Supposition, (as

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(as I have before done,) and at the same Time the ^{page} absolute Impossibility of destroying or removing ^{&c.} some Ideas, as of Eternity and Immensity, which ^{page 15.} therefore must needs be Modes or Attributes of a Necessary Being actually Existing. For if I have in my Mind an Idea of a Thing, and cannot possibly in my Imagination take away the Idea of that Thing as actually Existing, any more than I can change or take away the Idea of the Equality of twice Two to Four, the Certainty of the *Existence* of that Thing is the same, and stands on the same Foundation, as the Certainty of the other *Relation*. For the Relation of Equality between twice Two and Four has no other Certainty but this; that I cannot, without a Contradiction, change or take away the Idea of that Relation. We are *Certain* therefore of the Being of a Supreme Independent Cause; because 'tis strictly demonstrable, that there is Something in the Universe, actually Existing without us, the Supposition of whose Not-Existing plainly implies a Contradiction.

Some Writers have contended, that 'tis *preposterous* to inquire in this Manner *at all* into the *Ground* or *Reason* of the Existence of the *First Cause*: Because evidently the *First Cause* can have nothing *Prior* to it, and consequently must needs (they think) Exist *absolutely without Any Cause at all*. That the *First Cause* can have no *Other BEING* prior to it, to be the *Cause of its Existence*; is indeed Self-evident. But if *originally, absolutely, and antecedently* to all *Supposition* of Existence, there be *no necessary Ground or Reason* why the *First Cause* does *Exist*, rather than *not Exist*; If the *First Cause* can rightly and truly be affirmed to Exist, *absolutely without Any Ground or Reason of Existence* at all: It will unavoidably follow, by the same Argument, that it may as well *Cease* likewise to Exist, *without any Ground or Reason of Ceasing to Exist*. Which is absurd. The

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Truth therefore plainly is : Whatever is the *True Reason*, why the *First Cause* can never possibly *Cease* to Exist ; the Same is, and originally and always was, the *True Reason* why it *always did* and *cannot but Exist* : That is, 'tis the *True Ground* and *Reason* of its *Existence*.

*That the
Material
World can-
not possibly
be the Self-
Existent
Being.*

page 14.

4thly. From hence it follows, that *The Material World cannot possibly be the First and Original Being, Uncreated, Independent, and of itself Eternal.* For since it hath been already demonstrated, that Whatever Being hath Existed from Eternity, Independent, and without any External Cause of its Existence, must be Self-Existent ; and that Whatever is Self-Existent, must Exist Necessarily by an Absolute Necessity in the Nature of the Thing itself : It follows evidently, that unless the Material World Exists Necessarily, by an Absolute Necessity in its own Nature, so as that it must be an express Contradiction to suppose it not to Exist ; it cannot be Independent and of itself Eternal. Now that the Material World does not Exist thus Necessarily, is very Evident. For Absolute Necessity of Existing, and a Possibility of Not-Existing, being contradictory Ideas ; 'tis manifest the Material World cannot Exist Necessarily, if without a Contradiction we can Conceive it either *Not to Be*, or to be in any Respect *otherwise* than it Now is. Than which, nothing is more easy. For whether we consider the *Form* of the World, with the *Disposition* and *Motion* of its Parts ; or whether we consider the *Matter* of it, as such, without Respect to its present Form ; Every Thing in it, both the *Whole* and every one of its *Parts*, their *Situation* and *Motion*, the *Form* and also the *Matter*, are the most Arbitrary and Dependent Things, and the farthest removed from Necessity, that can possibly be imagined. A Necessity indeed of *Fitness*, that is, a Necessity that Things should be as they are, in order to the
Well-being

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Well-being of the Whole, there may be in all these Things: But an Absolute Necessity of *Nature* in any of them (which is what the Atheist must maintain) there is not the least Appearance of. If any Man will say in This Sense, (as every Atheist must do) either that the *Form* of the World, or at least the *Matter* and *Motion* of it, is Necessary; Nothing can possibly be invented more Absurd.

If he says, that the particular *Form* is Necessary; *The Form* that is, that the World, and *all Things* that are *of the* therein, Exist by Necessity of Nature; he must *World not* affirm it to be a Contradiction to suppose that any *Necessary.* Part of the World can be in any Respect *otherwise* than it now is. It must be a Contradiction in Terms to suppose *more or fewer* Stars, *more or fewer* Planets, or to suppose their *Size, Figure, or Motion,* Different from what it now is; or to suppose *more or fewer* Plants and Animals upon Earth, or the present ones of different *Shape and Bigness* from what they now are. In all which Things there is the greatest Arbitrariness in respect of Power and Possibility, that can be imagined; however Necessary any of them may be, in respect of Wisdom, and Preservation of the Beauty and Order of the Whole.

If the Atheist will say, that the *Motion in General* *Nor its* of all Matter is Necessary; it follows that it must *Motion.* be a Contradiction in Terms to suppose any Matter to be at *Rest*. Which is so absurd and ridiculous, that I think hardly any Atheists, either Antient or Modern, have presumed directly to suppose it.

One late * Author indeed has ventured to assert, * *Mr. Tol-* and pretended to prove, that *Motion* (that is, the *land, Lett.* *Conatus* to *Motion*, the *Tendency* to move, the *Power* III. or *Force* that produces actual Motion) is *essential* to all Matter. But how Philosophically, may appear from this One Consideration. The essential *Tendency to Motion*, of every one, or of any one Particle of
C 4 Matter

Matter in this Author's imaginary Infinite *Plenum*, must be either a *Tendency* to move some *one* determinate Way at once, or to move *every Way* at once. A *Tendency* to move some *one* determinate Way, cannot be essential to any Particle of Matter, but must arise from some External Cause; because there is nothing in the pretended necessary Nature of any Particle, to determine its Motion necessarily and essentially *one Way* rather than *another*. And a *Tendency* or *Conatus* equally to move *every Way* at once, is either an absolute Contradiction, or at least could produce nothing in Matter, but an Eternal *Rest* of all and every one of its Parts.

If the Atheist will suppose Motion necessary and essential to *some* Matter, but not to *all*: The same Absurdity, as to the *Determination* of Motion, still follows: And now he *moreover* supposes an Absolute Necessity *not Universal*; that is, that it shall be a Contradiction to suppose some certain Matter at Rest, tho' at the same Time some other Matter actually be at Rest.

Nor the
bare Mat-
ter.

If he only affirms bare *Matter* to be Necessary: Then, besides the extreme Folly of attributing *Motion* and the *Form* of the World to *Chance*; (which senseless Opinion I think All Atheists have now given up; and therefore I shall not think myself obliged to take any Notice of it in the Sequel of this Discourse:) it may be demonstrated by many Arguments drawn from the Nature and Affections of the Thing itself, that *Matter* is not a *Necessary Being*. For Instance, thus: If *Matter* be supposed to Exist Necessarily; then in that Necessary Existence there is either included the Power of *Gravitation*, or not. If not; then in a World *merely Material*, and in which *no Intelligent Being* presides, there *never could have been any Motion*; because Motion, as has been already shewn, and is now granted in the Question, is not Necessary *of itself*. But if the
Power

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Power of Gravitation *be* included in the pretended Necessary Existence of Matter; then, it following necessarily that there must be a *Vacuum*, (as the incomparable Sir *Isaac Newton** has abundantly demonstrated that there must, if Gravitation be an Universal Quality or Affection of Matter;) it follows likewise, that *Matter* is not a Necessary Being. For, if a *Vacuum* actually *be*, then 'tis plainly more than possible for Matter *not to Be*. If an Atheist will yet Assert, that Matter may be Necessary, tho' not necessary to be *every-where*: I answer, this is an exprefs Contradiction. For *absolute* Necessity, is absolute Necessity *every-where alike*. And, if it be no Impossibility for Matter to be absent from *one* Place, 'tis no Impossibility (absolutely in the Nature of the Thing; For no Relative or Consequential Necessity can have any Room in this Argument:) 'Tis no absolute Impossibility, I say, in the Nature of the Thing, that Matter should be absent from any *other* Place, or from *every* Place.

Spinoza, the most celebrated Patron of Atheism in our Time, who taught that † there is no Difference of Substances, but that the Whole and every Part of the *Material World* is a Necessarily-Existing Being; and that ‡ there is no other God, but the Universe: That he might seemingly avoid the manifold Absurdities of that Opinion, endeavours, by an Ambiguity of Expression in the Progress of his Discourse, to elude the Arguments by which he foresaw his Assertion would be confuted. For, having at first plainly asserted, that || All Substance is Necessarily-Existing; he would afterward seem to explain it away, by asserting, that the

Reason

*Principia Philosoph.
Edit. prima, p. 411.
Edit. secunda, p. 368.

Spinoza's Opinion confuted.

† Una substantia non potest produci ab alia substantia. *Ethic. Par. I. Prop. 6.*

Omnis substantia est necessario infinita. *Ibid. Prop. 8.*

Ad naturam substantiæ pertinet existere. *Ibid. Prop. 7.*

‡ Præter Deum nulla dari neq; concipi potest substantia. *Ibid. Prop. 14.*

|| Ad naturam substantiæ pertinet existere. *Prop. 7.*

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Res nullo alio modo, neq;
alio ordine a Deo produci
potuerunt, quam productæ
sunt. *Prop. 33.*

Ex Necessitate Divinæ Na-
turæ, infinita infinitis modis
(hoc est, omnia quæ sub intel-
lectum infinitum cadere pos-
sunt) sequi debent. *Prop. 16.*

*Reason why every Thing * Exists*
Necessarily and could not possibly
have been in any Respect different
from what it now is, is because
every Thing flows from the *Neces-*
sity of the Divine Nature. By which
if the unwary Reader understands,
that he means Things are *therefore*

Necessarily such as they are, because Infinite Wisdom
and Goodness could not possibly make Things but in
that Order which is Fittest and Wisest in the Whole;
he is very much mistaken: For such a Necessity is
not a Natural, but only a Moral and Consequential
Necessity, and directly contrary to the Author's
true Intention. Further; if the Reader hereby
understands, that *God* was determined, not by a
Necessity of Wisdom and Goodness, but by a
mere Natural Necessity, exclusive of Will and
Choice, to *make* all Things just as they now are;
neither is This the Whole of *Spinoza's* Meaning:
For This, as absurd as it is, is still supposing *God*
as a Substance distinct from the Material World;
Which † He expressly denies. Nay further; if any
one thinks his Meaning to be, that all *Substances*
in the World are only *Modifications* of the *Divine*
Essence; neither is This *All*; For thus *God* may
still be supposed as an Agent, acting upon *himself* at
least, and manifesting *himself* in different Manners,
according to his own Will: Which ‡ *Spinoza*
expressly denies.

But his true Meaning therefore,
however darkly and ambiguously
he sometimes speaks, must be
this; and, if he means any Thing
at all consistent with himself, can
be no other than this: That, since
'tis absolutely || impossible for any
Thing to be created or produced
by

† *Locis su-
pra citatis.*

‡ Deum non operari ex
libertate voluntatis. *Prop.*
32. Corol. 1. & Scholium ad
Prop. 17.

|| Una substantia non potest
produci ab alia substantia.
Prop. 6.

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by another; and * also absolutely impossible for God to have caused any Thing to be in any Respect different from what it now is; every Thing that Exists, must needs be so a † Part of the Divine Substance, not as a Modification caused in it by any ‡ Will, or Good-Pleasure, or Wisdom, in the Whole, but as of Absolute Necessity in itself, with Respect to the || *Manner* of the Existence of each Part, no less than with Respect to the Self-Existence of the Whole. Thus the Opinion of *Spinoza*, when expressed plainly and consistently, comes evidently to this: That *the Material World*, and every Part of it, with the *Order* and *Manner of Being* of each Part, is the only Self-Existent or Necessarily-Existing Being. And now consequently he must of Necessity affirm all the Conclusions, which I have before shewn to follow demonstrably from that Opinion. He cannot possibly avoid affirming, that 'tis a Contradiction (not *to the Perfections of God*; For that's mere senseless Cant and Amusement in Him who maintains that there is but One Substance in the Universe; But he must affirm, that 'tis *in itself* and *in Terms* a Contradiction) for any Thing to be, or to be imagined, in any Respect otherwise than it now is. He must say 'tis a Contradiction to suppose the *Number*, or *Figure*, or *Order* of the Principal Parts of the World, could possibly have been different from what they now are. He must say, Motion is Necessarily *of itself*; and consequently that 'tis a Contradiction in Terms to suppose any Matter to be at Rest: Or else he must affirm, (which is rather the more absurd of the two; as may appear from what

* Res nullo alio modo, alio ordine a Deo producta potuerunt, quam productae sunt. *Prop.* 33.

† Præter Deum nulla dari, neq; concipi potest substantia. *Prop.* 14.

‡ Deum non operari ex libertate voluntatis. *Prop.* 32. *Corol.* 1.

|| Nullo alio modo, neq; ordine, &c.

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page 11. what has been already said in Proof of the *Second*
General Head of this Discourse: And yet he
has * chosen to affirm it;) that

* Corpus motum, vel quiescens, ad motum vel quietem determinari debuit ab alio corpore, quod etiam ad motum vel quietem determinatum fuit ab alio, & illud iterum ab alio, & sic in infinitum.

Par. II. Prop. 13. Lemma 3.

Motion, as a Dependent Being, has been Eternally communicated from one Piece of Matter to another; without having at all any Original Cause of its Being, either within itself or from without.

Which, with the other like Consequences touching the Necessity of the Existence of Things; (the very Mention of which is a sufficient Confutation of any Opinion they follow from;) do, as I have said, unavoidably follow from the fore-mentioned Opinion of *Spinoza*. And consequently That Opinion, viz. *That the Universe or Whole World is the Self-Existent or Necessarily-Existing Being*, is demonstrated to be false.

I have, in this Attempt to shew that *The Material World cannot possibly be the First and Original Being, Uncreated, Independent, and Self-Existent*; designedly omitted the Argument usually drawn from the *supposed* absolute Impossibility, in the Nature of the Thing itself, of the World's being *Eternal*, or having Existed thro' an Infinite Succession of Time. And this I have done for the two following Reasons.

Of the Opinion concerning the Eternity of the World.

1st. Because the Question between us and the Atheists is not, *Whether the World can possibly have been Eternal?* but, *Whether it can possibly be the Original, Independent, and Self-Existing Being?* Which is a very different Question. For many, who have affirmed the One, have still utterly denied the Other. And almost all the Antient Philosophers that held the *Eternity* of the World, in whose Authority and Reasons our Modern Atheists do so greatly boast and triumph; defended That their Opinion, by such Arguments as shew plainly that they did by no Means thereby intend to assert, that the Material
World

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World was the *Original*, Independent, Self-Existing Being, in Opposition to the Belief of the Existence of a Supreme All-governing *Mind*, which is the Notion of God. So that the Deniers of the Being of God have no Manner of Advantage from that Opinion of the *Eternity* of the World, even supposing it could not be disproved. Almost all the old Philosophers, I say, who held the *Eternity* of the World, did not thereby mean (at least their Arguments do not tend to prove) that it was *Independent* and Self-Existent; but their Arguments are wholly levelled, either to prove barely that *Something* must needs be Eternal, and that the *Universe* could not possibly arise out of Nothing absolutely and without Cause; which is all that *Ocellus Lucanus's* Arguments amount to: Or else that the World is an *Eternal* and Necessary *Effect*, flowing from the Essential and Immutable Energy of the Divine Nature; which seems to have been *Aristotle's* Opinion: Or else that the World is an Eternal Voluntary Emanation from the All-wise and Supreme Cause; which was the Opinion of many of *Plato's Followers*. None of which Opinions or Arguments will in the least help out our Modern Atheists; who would exclude Supreme *Mind* and Intelligence out of the Universe. For however the Opinion of the Eternity of the World is really inconsistent with the Belief of its being Created in Time: yet so long as the Defenders of that Opinion either did not think it Inconsistent with the Belief of the World's being the *Effect* and *Work* of an *Eternal*, *All-wise*, and *All-powerful Mind*; or at least could defend that Opinion by such Arguments only, as did not in the least prove the Self-Existence or *Independency* of the World, but most of them rather quite the contrary; 'tis with the greatest Injustice and Unreasonableness in the World, that Modern Atheists (to whose Purpose the *Eternity* or *Non-Eternity* of the World would

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would signify nothing, unless at the same Time the Existence and Sovereignty of Eternal Intelligence or Mind were likewise disproved) pretend either the Authority or the Reasons of these Men to be on their Side.

Ocellus Lucanus, one of the ancientest Asserters of the Eternity of the World; (whose Antiquity and Authority * *Mr. Blunt* opposes to

* *Oracles of Reason*; Letter to *Mr. Gildon*, p. 216.

† Ἀγέννητον τὸ πᾶν καὶ ἀνώ-
λεθρον.

Ἀναρχον καὶ ἀτελεύτητον.

Κόσμος αὐτὸς ἐξ ἑαυτοῦ αἰδι-
ός ἐστι καὶ αὐτοτελής, καὶ δια-
μένων τὸν πάντα αἰῶνα.

Ἀεὶ ὅλος τοῦ κόσμου, ἀναγ-
κῆστον καὶ τὰ μέρη αὐτῆ συνυ-
πάρχειν. Λέγω δὲ μέρη, οὐρα-
νὸν, γῆν, &c. *Ocell. Lucan.*
Περὶ τῆς τῆ παντὸς φύσεως.

‡ Τὸ ἀναρχον καὶ ἀτελεύτητον
τῆ σχήματος καὶ τῆς κινήσεως,
πιστῆται διότι ἀγέννητος ὁ κόσμος
καὶ ἀφθάρτος· ἥτε γὰρ τοῦ σχή-
ματος ἰδέα, κύκλος· οὗρος δὲ πάν-
τοθεν ἴσος καὶ ὁμοιος, διὸπερ
ἀναρχος καὶ ἀτελεύτητος. ἢ τε
τῆς κινήσεως, &c. *Ibid.*

Thus translated: Nay, that
the Figure, Motion, &c. thereof,
are without Beginning and End;
thereby it plainly appears, that
the World admitteth neither Pro-
duction nor Dissolution. For the

Figure is Spherical, and conse-
quently on every Side equal, and therefore without Beginning or Ending. Also
the Motion is circular, &c. *Oracles of Reason*, p. 215.

that of *Moses*;) in delivering his Opinion, speaks indeed like one that believed the Material World to be Self-Existent; asserting, † that it is utterly incapable either of Generation or Corruption, of Beginning or End; that it is of itself Eternal and Perfect, and Permanent for ever; and that the Frame and Parts of the World must needs be Eternal, as well as the Substance and Matter of the Whole. But when he comes to produce his Arguments

or Reasons for his Opinion; they are either so very absurd and ridiculous, that even any *Atheist* in this Age ought to be ashamed to repeat them; as when

he proves ‡ that the World must needs be Eternal, without Beginning or End, because both its Figure and Motion are a Circle, which has neither Beginning nor End: Or else they are such Arguments as prove only, what no Man ever really denied; viz. That Something must needs be Eternal, because 'tis impossible for every Thing to arise out of Nothing, or to fall into Nothing;

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Nothing ; As when he says * that *the World must have been Eternal, because 'tis a Contradiction for the Universe to have had a Beginning ; since, if it had a Beginning, it must have been caused by Some other Thing, and then it is not the Universe.* To which One Argument, all that he says in his whole Book, is plainly reducible. So that 'tis evident, all that he really proves, is only this ; that there must needs be an *Eternal Being* in the Universe : and not, that *Matter* is Self-Existent, in Opposition to Intelligence and Mind. For, all that he asserts about the absolute Necessity of the *Order and Parts* of the World, is confessedly most ridiculous ; not at all proved by the Arguments he alledges : And in some Passages of this very Book, as well as in other Fragments, he himself supposes, and is forced expressly to confess, that, however Eternal and Necessary every Thing in the World be imagined to be ; yet even That Necessity must flow from an † *Eternal and Intelligent Mind*, the necessary Perfections of whose Nature are the Cause ‡ of the *Harmony and Beauty of the World*, and particularly of Mens having || *Faculties, Organs of Sense, Appetites, &c.* fitted even to *Final Causes*.

Aristotle likewise was a great Asserter indeed of the Eternity of the World : But not in Opposition to the Belief of the Being, or of the Power, Wisdom, or Goodness of God. On the contrary, He for no other Reason asserted the World to be Eternal, but because he fancied that such an Effect must needs Eternally proceed from such an Eternal Cause. And so far was he from teaching, that *Matter* is the First and Original Cause of all Things ; that, on the contrary, he every-where expressly describes

God

* Ἀγέννητον τὸ πᾶν.—
γὰρ γέγονεν, ἐκεῖνο πρῶτον τὸ
παντός ἐστι.—Τὸ γε δὲ πᾶν γινώ-
μενον σὺν πᾶσι γίνεσθαι, καὶ τῷτο
γε δὲ ἀδύνατον.—Ἐκλὸς γὰρ τῷ
Παντός ἐδδέν. Ocell. Ibid.

† Τὸ ἀεικίνητον θεῖον μὲν, καὶ
λόγον ἔχον καὶ ἔμφρον. Ocell.
Luc. de Leg. Fragm.

‡ Συνέχει τὸν κόσμον ἁρμονία.
Ταύτης δ' αἰτίας ὁ Θεός. Ibid.

|| Τὰς δυνάμεις καὶ τὰ ὄργανα
καὶ τὰς ὁρέξεις ὑπὸ Θεῷ δεδομέ-
νας ἀνθρώποις, ἔχ' ἡδονῆς ἕνεκα
δεδοσθαι συμβέβηκεν, ἀλλὰ, &c.
Idem Περὶ τῆς τῷ παντός φύσεως.

A Demonstration of the

God to be an * *Intelligent Being* :
 † *Incorporeal* : ‡ *The First Mover*
of all Things, Himself Immoveable ;
 and affirms, that || *if there were*
nothing but Matter in the World,
there would be no Original Cause,
but an Infinite Progression of Causes :
 Which is absurd.

As to those Philosophers, who taught plainly and
 expressly, that Matter was not only Eternal, but also
Self-Existent and intirely Independent, Co-existing
 from Eternity with God, independently, as a Second
 Principle : I have already shewn the Impossibility
 of this Opinion, at the Entrance upon the present
 Head of Discourse, where I proved that Matter
 could not possibly be *Self-Existent*. And I shall
 further demonstrate it to be False, when I come to
 prove the *Unity* of this Self-Existent Being.

Plato, whatever his Opinion was about the ori-
 ginal *Matter*, very largely and fully declares his
 Sentiments about the *Formation* of the World, viz.
 That it was composed and framed by an Intelligent
 and Wise God. And there is no one of all the
 Antient Philosophers, who, in all his Writings,
 speaks so excellently and worthily
 * as He, concerning the Nature
 and Attributes of God. Yet, as
 to the *Time* of the World's begin-
 ning to be Formed, he seems to
 make it indefinite, when he says,

† *The World must needs be an Eternal Resemblance of*
the Eternal Idea. At least his Followers afterward so
 understood and explained it, as if, by the Creation
 of the World, was not to be understood a Creation
in

* Ὁ ποιητὴς καὶ πάλιν τοῦδε
 τοῦ παντός.

Ὁ γῆν, ἔρανόν, καὶ θεός, καὶ
 πάντα τὰ ἐν ἔρανῳ καὶ τὰ ἐν αἰθέρι
 καὶ ὑπὸ γῆς ὅπαντα ἐρρασαμένους.
De Republ. Lib. 10.

† Πᾶσα ἀνάγκη τόνδε κόσμον, εἰκόνα τινὸς εἶναι. *Plato in Timæo.*
Which Words, being very imperfect in our Copies of the Original, are thus
rendered by Cicero : Si ergo generatus [est mundus ;] ad id effectus est,
 quod ratione sapientiaq; comprehenditur, atq; immutabili æternitate con-
 tinetur. Ex quo efficitur, ut sit necesse hunc quem cernimus mundum, simula-
 chrum æternum esse alicujus æterni. *Cic. de Univerf.*

† Θεὸν ἀσώματον ἀπέφηνε.

Diog. in Vita Aristot.

‡ Τὸ πρῶτον κινεῖν, ἀκίνητον.
Aristot. Metaph.

|| Εἰ μὴ ἔσαι παρὰ τὰ αἰσθητὰ
 ἄλλα, ἔκ ἔσαι ἀρχὴ καὶ τάξις.
 ἀλλ' αἰεὶ τῆς ἀρχῆς ἀρχή. *Ibid.*

Being and Attributes of GOD.

*in Time**; but only an Order of Nature, Causality, and Dependence: That is, that the *Will* of God, and his Power of Acting, being necessarily as Eternal as his Essence; † the Effects of *That* Will and Power *might be supposed* cœval to the Will and Power themselves; in the same Manner, as *Light* would eternally proceed from the *Sun*, or a *Shadow* from the *interposed Body*, or an *Impression* from an *imposed Seal*, if the respective Causes of these Effects were supposed Eternal.

From all which, it plainly appears how little Reason Modern Atheists have to boast either of the Authority or Reasons of those Antient Philosophers who held the Eternity of the World. For since these Men neither proved, nor attempted to prove, that the Material World was Original to itself, Independent, or Self-Existing; but only that it was an Eternal Effect of an Eternal Cause, which is God: 'tis evident that this their Opinion, even supposing it could by no Means be refuted, could afford no Manner of Advantage to the Cause of Atheists in our Days, who, excluding Supreme Mind and Intelligence out of the Universe, would make mere Matter and Necessity the Original and Eternal Cause of all Things.

D 2dly. The

* Νοῦν πρὸ κόσμου
ὡς χρόνῳ πρότερον αὐτῷ ὄντα, καὶ
ὅτι ὁ κόσμος παρὰ νῦν ἐστίν. Φύσει
πρότερος ἐκεῖνος καὶ αἰσίον τετε.
Plotinus.

Qui autem a Deo quidem factum fatentur, non tamen eum volunt Temporis habere, sed suæ Creationis initium; ut, modo quodam vix intelligibili, Semper sit factus. *Augustin. de Civit. Dei. Lib. 11. Cap. 4.*

De mundo, & de his quos in mundo Deos a Deo factos scribit Plato, apertissime dicit eos esse cœpisse, & habere initium. — Verum id quomodo intelligant, invenerunt [Platonici;] non esse hoc videlicet Temporis, sed Substitutionis initium. *Ibid. Lib. 10. Cap. 31.*

Sed mundum quidem fuisse semper, Philosophia auctor est; conditore quidem Deo, sed non ex tempore. *Macrob. in Somn. Scip. Lib. 2. Cap. 10.*

† Καὶ εἰ βέλαι, παραδείγματι
σέ τινα τῶν γνωρίμων ξαναγήσω
πρὸς τὸ ζητῶμενον. Φασὶ γὰρ ὅτι
καθάπερ αἰτίον τὸ σῶμα τῆς ἐπά-
σης σκιάς γίνεσθαι. ὁμόχρονος δὲ τῷ
σώματι ἡ σκιά, καὶ ἐχ' ὁμοτιμία.
ἔτω δὴ καὶ ὅδε ὁ κόσμος παρα-
κολυθῆμα ἐστὶ τῷ Θεῷ αἰτίῳ ὄντι
αὐτῷ τῷ εἶναι, καὶ συναϊδὸς ἔστω
τῷ Θεῷ, ἐκείνῳ δὲ καὶ ὁμοτιμία.
Zacharia Scholast. Disputat.

Sicut enim, inquiunt [Platonici,] si pes ex æternitate semper fuisset in pulvere, semper ei subesset vestigium; quod tamen vestigium a calcante factum nemo dubitaret; nec alterum altero prius esset; quamvis alterum ab altero factum esset: Sic, inquiunt, & mundus

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atq; in illo Dii creati,
semper fuerunt, semper
existente qui fecit; & tamen
facti sunt. *Augustin. de Civit.
Dei. Lib. 10. Cap. 31.*

2dly. The other Reason why
(in this Attempt to prove that
*the Material World cannot possibly
be the First and Original Being,
Uncreated, Independent, and Self-*

Existent) I have omitted the Argument usually
drawn from the *supposed* absolute Impossibility of
the World's being Eternal, or having Existed
through an Infinite Succession of Time; is *because
That Argument can never be so stated, as to be of any
Use in Convincing or Affecting the Mind of an Atheist,*
who must not be *supposed* to come prepared before-
hand with any *transcendent* Idea of the Eternity of
God. For since an Atheist cannot be supposed to
believe the Nice and Subtle (and indeed unintel-
ligible) Distinctions of the Schools; 'tis impossible
by this Argument so to disprove the Possibility of
the Eternity of the World, but that an Atheist will
understand it to prove equally against the Possibility
of Any Thing's being Eternal; and consequently
that it proves nothing at all, but is only a Difficulty
arising from our not being able to comprehend ade-
quately the Notion of Eternity. That the Material
World is *not* Self-Existent or Necessarily-Existing,
but the Product of some distinct superior Agent,
may (as I have already shewn) be strictly demon-
strated by bare Reason, against the most obstinate
Atheist in the World. But the *Time when* the
World was Created; or whether its Creation was,
properly speaking, *in Time*; is not so easy to de-
monstrate strictly by bare Reason, (as appears from
the Opinions of many of the Antient Philosophers
concerning that Matter;) but the Proof of it can
be taken only from Revelation. To endeavour to
prove, that there cannot possibly be any such Thing
as *infinite Time or Space*, from the Impossibility of
an * Addition of Finite Parts ever composing or
exhausting an Infinite: Or from the imaginary *In-*
equality of the Number of Years, Days, and Hours,
that

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that would be contained in the one; or of the Miles, Yards, and Feet, that would be contained in the other; is supposing Infinites to be made up of *Numbers* of Finites; that is, 'tis supposing Finite Quantities to be *Aliquot* or *Constituent* Parts of Infinite; when indeed they are not so, but do all *Equally*, whether *Great* or *Small*, whether *Many* or *Few*, bear the very same Proportion to an Infinite, as Mathematical Points do to a Line, or Lines to a Superficies, or as Moments do to Time; that is, none at all. So that to argue absolutely against the Possibility of *Infinite* Space or Time, merely from the imaginary Inequality of the *Numbers* of their Finite Parts; which are not properly Constituent Parts, but mere Nothings in Proportion; is the very same Thing as it would be to argue against the Possibility of the Existence of any determinate *Finite* Quantity, from the imaginary Equality or Inequality of the *Number* of the Mathematical Lines and Points contained therein; when indeed neither the one nor the other have (in Propriety of Speech) any *Number* at all, but they are absolutely *without Number*: Neither can *Any* given Number or Quantity be *any Aliquot* or *Constituent* Part of Infinite, or be compared at all with it, or bear any Kind of Proportion to it; or be the Foundation of any Argument in any Question concerning it.

IV. *What the Substance or Essence of that Being, The Es-*
which is Self-Existent, or Necessarily-Existing, is; sence of the
we have no Idea, neither is it at all possible for us to Self-Exist-
comprehend it. That there is such a Being actually ent Being,
Existing without us, we are sure (as I have already Incompre-
shewn) by strict and undeniable Demonstration. hensible.
Also what it is not; that is, that the Material World *pages 13,*
is not it, as Modern Atheists would have it; has been *14, 15.*
already Demonstrated. But what it is, I mean as
to its Substance and Essence; this we are Infinitely *page 21.*

A Demonstration of the

unable to comprehend. Yet this does not in the least diminish the Certainty of the Demonstration of its Existence. For 'tis one Thing, to know certainly that a Being Exists; and another, to know *what* the Essence of that Being is. And the One may be capable of the strictest Demonstration, when the Other is absolutely beyond the Reach of all our Faculties to understand. A Blind or Deaf Man has infinitely more Reason to deny the Being, or the Possibility of the Being, of Light or Sounds; than any Atheist can have to deny, or doubt of, the Existence of God. For the One can at the utmost have no other Proof, but credible *Testimony*, of the Existence of certain Things, whereof 'tis absolutely impossible that he himself should frame any Manner of Idea, not only of their Essence, but even of their Effects and Properties: But the Other may, with the least Use of his Reason, be assured of the Existence of a Supreme Being, by undeniable *Demonstration*; and may also certainly know Abundance of its Attributes, (as shall be made appear in the following Propositions) though its *Substance* or Essence be intirely incomprehensible. Wherefore nothing can be more Unreasonable and Weak, than for an Atheist upon this Account to deny the Being of God, merely because his weak and finite Understanding cannot frame to itself any adequate Notion of the Substance or Essence of that First and Supreme Cause. We are utterly ignorant of the *Substance* or Essence of *all other* Things; even of those Things which we converse most familiarly with, and think we understand best. There is not so mean and contemptible a Plant or Animal, that does not confound the most enlarged Understanding upon Earth: Nay, even the simplest and plainest of all inanimate Beings have their Essence or *Substance* hidden from Us in the deepest and most impenetrable Obscurity. How weak then and foolish
is

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is it to raise Objections against the Being of God, from the Incomprehensibleness of his Essence! and to represent it as a strange and incredible Thing, that there should Exist any incorporeal Substance, the Essence of which we are not able to Comprehend! As if it were not far more strange, that there should Exist numberless Objects of our Senses, Things subject to our daily Inquiry, Search, and Examination; and yet we not be able, no not in any Measure, to find out the *real Essence* of any one even of the least of *these* Things,

Nevertheless, 'tis very necessary to observe here by the Way, that it does not at all from hence follow, that there *can possibly* be in the *unknown Substance* or *Essence* of God, any Thing *contradictory* to our clear Ideas. For as a Blind Man, tho' he has no *Idea* of *Light* and *Colours*, yet knows certainly and infallibly that there *cannot possibly* be any Kind of *Light* which is *not Light*, or any Sort of *Colour* which is *not a Colour*: So, though we have no *Idea* of the *Substance* of God, nor indeed of the *Substance* of any Other Being; yet we are as infallibly certain that there cannot possibly be, either in the One or the Other, any *contradictory* Modes or Properties; as if we had the *clearest* and *most distinct* Idea of them,

From what has been said upon this Head, we may observe,

1st. *The Weakness of such, as have presumed to Of Infinite imagine Infinite Space to be a just Representation or Space. adequate Idea of the Essence of the Supreme Cause.*

This is a weak Imagination, arising from hence, that Men using themselves to judge of all Things by their Senses only, fancy Spiritual or Immaterial *Substances* because they are not Objects of their Corporeal Senses, to be as it were mere Nothings; Just as Children imagine Air, because they cannot see it, to be mere Emptiness and Nothing. But the Fallacy is too gross, to deserve being Insisted upon.

A Demonstration of the

There are perhaps Numberless Substances in the World, whose Essences are as intirely unknown and impossible to be represented to our Imaginations, as Colours are to a Man that was born Blind, or Sounds to One that has been always Deaf. Nay, there is no Substance in the World, of which we know any Thing further, than only a certain Number of its Properties or Attributes; of which we know fewer in some Things, and in Others more. Infinite Space is nothing else but an abstract Idea of Immensity or Infinity; even as infinite Duration is of Eternity. And it would be just as proper to say that Eternity is the Essence of the Supreme Cause; as to say, that Immensity is so. Indeed they seem Both to be but *Modes* of an Essence or Substance Incomprehensible to Us; And, when we endeavour to represent the real Substance of Any Being whatsoever in our Weak Imaginations, we shall find ourselves in like Manner deceived.

*The Vanity
of the
Schoolmen.*

2dly. From hence appears the *Vanity of the Schoolmen*; who, as in other Matters, so in their Disputes about the Self-Existent Being, when they come at what they are by no Means able to comprehend or explain; lest they should seem ignorant of any Thing, they give us Terms of Art, and Words of Amusement; mere empty Sounds, which, under Pretense of explaining the Matter before them, have really no Manner of Idea or Signification at all. Thus when they tell us concerning the Essence of God, that He is *Purus Actus*, *mera Forma*, and the like; Either the Words have no Meaning, and signify nothing; or else they express only the Perfection of his *Power*, and other Attributes; Which is not what these Men intend to express by them.

*That the
Self-Existent
Being
must be
Eternal.*

V. *Though the Substance or Essence of the Self-Existent Being is itself absolutely Incomprehensible to us; yet many of the Essential Attributes of his Nature are strictly Demonstrable, as well as his Existence.*

Thus,

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Thus, in the first Place, *the Self-Existent Being must of Necessity be Eternal.* The Ideas of Eternity and Self-Existence are so closely connected, that, because Something must of Necessity be Eternal, *Independently, and without any outward Cause of its Being,* therefore it must necessarily be Self-Existent; and, because 'tis impossible but Something must be Self-Existent, therefore 'tis necessary that it must likewise be Eternal. To be Self-Existent, is (as has been already shewn) to Exist by an Absolute Necessity in the Nature of the Thing itself. Now ^{pages 15,} ^{16.} this Necessity being Absolute, and not depending upon any Thing External, must be always unalterably the same; Nothing being alterable, but what is capable of being affected by somewhat without itself. That Being therefore, which has no other Cause of its Existence, but the absolute Necessity of its own Nature; must of Necessity have Existed from Everlasting, without Beginning; and must of Necessity Exist to Everlasting, without End.

As to the *Manner* of this Eternal Existence; 'tis manifest, it herein infinitely transcends the Manner of the Existence of all Created Beings, even of such as shall Exist for ever; that whereas 'tis not possible for Their finite Minds to comprehend all that is past, or to understand perfectly all Things that are at present, much less to know all that is future, or to have intirely in their Power any Thing that is to come; but their Thoughts, and Knowledge, and Power, must of Necessity have Degrees and Periods, and be successive and transient as the Things Themselves: The Eternal Supreme Cause, on the contrary, (supposing him to be an *Intelligent Being*, which will hereafter be proved in the Sequel of this Discourse) must of Necessity have such a perfect, independent, and unchangeable Comprehension of all Things, that there can be no One Point or Instant of his Eternal Duration, wherein all Things

A Demonstration of the

that are past, present, or to come, will not be as intirely known and represented to him in one single Thought or View; and all Things present and future, be equally intirely in his Power and Direction; as if there was really no Succession at all, but all Things were actually present at once. Thus far we can speak Intelligibly concerning the Eternal Duration of the Self-Existent Being; And no *Atheist* can say this is an Impossible, Absurd, or Insufficient Account. It is, in the most Proper and Intelligible Sense of the Words, to all the Purposes of Excellency and Perfection, *Interminabilis Vitæ tota simul & perfecta Possessio*: The Intire and Perfect Possession of an endless Life.

With re-
spect to
Succession.

Others have supposed that the Difference between the Manner of the Eternal Existence of the Supreme Cause, and that of the Existence of Created Beings, is this: That, whereas the latter is a continual transient Succession of Duration; the former is one Point or Instant comprehending Eternity, and wherein all Things are really Co-Existent. But this Distinction I shall not now insist upon, as being of no Use in the present Dispute; because 'tis impossible to prove and explain it in such a Manner, as ever to convince an *Atheist* that there is any Thing in it. And besides: As, on the one Hand, the School-men have indeed generally chosen to defend it:

Crucem ingenio figere, ut rem capiat fugientem cap-
tum.—Tam fieri non potest,
ut instans [Temporis] coexist-
at rei successivæ, quam im-
possibile est punctum coexist-
ere [coextendi] lineæ.—Lusus merus non intellectorum verborum. *Gassend.
Physic. Lib. 1.*

so, on the other Hand, there *
are many Learned Men, of far
better Understanding and Judgment,
who have rejected and opposed it.

VI. The

I shall not trouble you with the inconsistent and unintelligible Notions of the Schoolmen; that it [the Eternity of God] is duratio tota simul, in which we are not to conceive any Succession, but to imagine it an Instant. We may as well conceive the Immensity of God to be a Point, as his Eternity to be an Instant.—And how That can be together, which must necessarily be imagined to be co-existent to Successions; let them that can, conceive. *Archbishop Tillotson, Vol. 7. Sermon 13.*

Others

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VI. *The Self-Existent Being must of Necessity be Infinite and Omnipresent.* The Idea of Infinity or Immensity, as well as of Eternity, is so closely connected with that of Self-Existence, that because 'tis impossible but Something must be Infinite, ^{Self-Existent Being must be Infinite and Omnipresent.} *Independently and of itself,* (for else it would be impossible there should be any Infinite at all, unless an Effect could be perfecter than its Cause; therefore it must of Necessity be Self-Existent: And, because Something must of Necessity be Self-Existent, therefore 'tis necessary that it must likewise be Infinite. To be Self-Existent (as has been already shewn) is to Exist by an Absolute Necessity in the ^{pages 15 & 16.} Nature of the Thing itself. Now this Necessity being Absolute in itself, and not depending on any Outward Cause; 'tis evident it must be *every-where*, as well as *always*, unalterably the same. For a Necessity which is not every-where the same, is plainly a Consequential Necessity only, depending upon some External Cause, and not an Absolute one in its own Nature: For a Necessity absolutely such in itself has no Relation to Time or Place, or any Thing else. Whatever therefore Exists by an Absolute Necessity in its own Nature, must needs be Infinite as well as Eternal. To suppose a Finite Being to be Self-Existent; is to say that 'tis a Contradiction for That Being not to Exist, the Absence of which may yet be conceived without a Contradiction. Which is the greatest Absurdity

Others say, God sees and knows future Things, by the Presentiality and Co-Existence of all Things in Eternity; For they say, that Future Things are actually Present and Existing to God, though not in mensura propria, yet in mensura aliena. The Schoolmen have much more of this Jargon and canting Language. I envy no Man the understanding these Phrases; But to me they seem to signify nothing, but to have been Words invented by idle and conceited Men; which a great many ever since, lest they should seem to be ignorant, would seem to understand. But I wonder most, that Men, when they have amused and puzzled themselves and others with hard Words, should call this Explaining Things. Archbishop Tillotson, Vol. 6. Sermon. 6.

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furdity in the World. For, if a Being can without a Contradiction be absent from One Place, it may without a Contradiction be absent likewise from another Place, and from all Places: And whatever Necessity it may have of Existing, must arise from some External Cause, and not absolutely from itself; And consequently the Being cannot be Self-Existent.

From hence it follows,

1st. That the Infinity of the Self-Existent Being must be an Infinity of *Fullness* as well as of *Immensity*; That is, it must not only be without *Limits*, but also without *Diversity*, *Defect*, or *Interruption*. For Instance: Could *Matter* be supposed *Boundless*, it would not therefore follow that it was in this complete Sense *Infinite*; because, though it had no *Limits*, yet it might have within itself any assignable *Vacuities*. But Whatever is Self-Existent, must of Necessity Exist absolutely in every Place alike, and be equally present every-where; and consequently must have a true and absolute Infinity, both of *Immensity* and *Fullness*.

2^{dly}. From hence it follows, that the Self-Existent Being must be a most Simple, Unchangeable, Incorruptible Being; without Parts, Figure, Motion, Divisibility, or any other such Properties as we find in Matter. For all these Things do plainly and necessarily imply Finiteness in their very Notion, and are utterly inconsistent with complete Infinity. *Divisibility* is a Separation of Parts, real or mental: Meaning by *mental Separation*, not barely a *partial Apprehending*; (for *Space*, for Instance, which is

absolutely indivisible and inseparable either really or *mentally, may yet be *partially apprehended*;) but a removing, disjoining, or separating of Parts one from another, even so much as in the Imagination.

* Ordo partium spatii est immutabilis: Moveantur hæc de locis suis, & movebuntur (ut ita dicam) de seipsis.

Newton. Princip. Schol. ad Definit. 8.

And

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And any such Separation or Removing of Parts one from another, is *really* or *mentally* a setting of Bounds: Either of which destroys Infinity. *Motion*, for the same Reason, implies Finiteness: And *to have Parts*, properly speaking, signifies either Difference and Diversity of Existence: which is inconsistent with Necessity; or else it signifies Divisibility, *real* or *mental* as before, which is inconsistent with complete Infinity. *Corruption*, *Change*, or *any Alteration whatsoever*, implies Motion, Separation of Parts, and Finiteness. And any Manner of *Composition*, in Opposition to the most perfect *Simplicity*, signifies Difference and Diversity in the Manner of Existence; Which is inconsistent with Necessity.

'Tis evident therefore, that the Self-Existent Being must be *Infinite* in the *strictest* and most *complete* Sense. But as to the *particular Manner* of his being Infinite or every-where present, in Opposition to the Manner of Created Things being present in such or such finite Places; This is as impossible for our finite Understandings to comprehend or explain, as it is for us to form an adequate Idea of Infinity. Yet that the Thing is true, that he is actually *Omnipresent*, we are as certain, as we are that there must Something be Infinite; which no Man, who has thought upon these Things at all, ever denied. The *Schoolmen* indeed have presumed to assert, that the Immenfity of God is a *Point*, as his Eternity (they think) is an *Instant*. But, this being altogether Unintelligible; That which we can more safely affirm, and which no Atheist can say is absurd, and which nevertheless is sufficient to all wise and good Purposes, is this: That whereas all Finite and Created Beings can be present but in One definite Place at Once; and Corporeal Beings even in That One Place very imperfectly and unequally, to any Purpose of Power or Activity, only by the Successive Motion

Of the Manner of our Conceiving the Immenfity of God.

A Demonstration of the

Motion of different Members and Organs; The Supreme Cause, on the contrary, being an Infinite and most Simple Essence, and comprehending all Things perfectly in himself, is *at all Times equally* present, both in his Simple Essence, and by the Immediate and Perfect Exercise of all his Attributes, to *every Point* of the Boundless Immensity, *as if* it were really all but one Single Point.

That the Self-Existent Being can be but One.

VII. *The Self-Existent Being must of Necessity be but One.* This evidently follows from his being *Necessarily-Existent.* For *Necessity* Absolute in itself is *Simple*, and *Uniform*, and *Universal*, without any possible *Difference*, *Difformity*, or *Variety* whatsoever: And all *Variety* or *Difference* of *Existence* must needs arise from some *External Cause*, and be dependent upon it, and proportionable to the *Efficiency* of That *Cause*, whatsoever it be. *Absolute Necessity*, in which there can be *no Variation* in any *Kind* or *Degree*, cannot be the *Ground* of *Existence* of a *Number* of *Beings*, however *similar* and *agreeing*: Because, without any *Other Difference*, even *Number* is itself a manifest *Difformity* or *Inequality* (if I may so speak) of *Efficiency* or *Causality*.

Again: To suppose *Two* (or more) *distinct Beings* Existing of themselves, necessarily, and independent from each other; implies this plain *Contradiction*; that, *each* of them being *independent* from the other, they may *either of them* be supposed to Exist alone, so that it will be no *Contradiction* to imagine the other

not to Exist; and consequently *neither of them* * will be *Necessarily-Existing*. Whatsoever therefore Exists *Necessarily*, is the *One*

Simple Essence of the *Self-Existent Being*; And whatsoever differs from that, is not *Necessarily-Existing*: Because in *absolute Necessity* there can be no *Difference* or *Diversity* of *Existence*. Other
Beings

* See This farther explained, in the Answer to the First Letter, at the End of this Book.

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Beings there may be innumerable, besides the One Infinite Self-Existent: But no Other Being can be Self-Existent, because so it would be individually the same, at the same Time that it is supposed to be different.

From hence it follows,

1st. That the *Unity* of God is a *true and real*, not *Of the figurative*, Unity. With which Prime Foundation *Trinity* of *Natural Religion*, how the *Scripture-Doctrine* of the *Trinity* perfectly agrees, I have *elsewhere* endeavoured to show particularly, in its proper Place.

2^{dly}. From hence it follows, That 'tis impossible *The Impos-* there should be Two different Self-Existent Independent *sibility of* Principles, as some Philosophers have imagined; such *two Inde-* as God and Matter. For since Self-Existence is *pendent* Necessary-Existence; and since 'tis an express Contradiction (as has already been shewn) that two dif- *page 44.* ferent Beings should each be Necessarily-Existing; it evidently follows, that 'tis absolutely impossible there should be Two Independent Self-Existent Principles, such as *God and Matter*.

3^{dly}. From hence we may observe the Vanity, *The Error* Folly, and Weakness of *Spinoza*: Who, because the *of Spinoza.* Self-Existent Being must necessarily be but One, concludes from thence, that * *the*

whole World, and every Thing contained therein, is One Uniform Substance; Eternal, Uncreated, and Necessary: Whereas just on the contrary he ought to have concluded, that because all Things in the World are very *different* one from another, and have all Manner of *Variety*, and all the Marks of *Will*, and Arbitrariness, and Changeableness, (and none of Necessity) in them; being plainly fitted with very *different* Powers, to very *different* Ends; and distinguished one from another by a *Diversity*, not only of *Modes*, but also of

* Una substantia non potest
produci ab alia. *Ethic. Par. I.*
Prop. 6.

Ad naturam substantiæ per-
tinet existeret. *Prop. 7.*

Præter Deum nulla dari,
neq; concipi potest substantia.
Prop. 14.

A Demonstration of the

of *essential Attributes*, and consequently (so far as 'tis possible for us, by the Use of our present Faculties, to attain any Knowledge at all of them) of their *Substances* themselves also; therefore *none of these Things are Necessary or Self-Existent*, but must needs depend all upon some *External Cause*, that is, on the *One Supreme, Unchangeable, Self-Existent Being*. That which led *Spinoza* into his foolish and destructive Opinion, and on which alone all his *Argumentation*

is intirely built, is That *absurd Definition of Substance*; * that it is *Something, the Idea of which does not depend on, or pre-suppose, the Idea of any other Thing, from which it might proceed; but includes in itself Necessary-Existence*. Which Definition is either *false*, and signifies nothing; and then his whole Doctrine, built upon it, falls at once to the Ground: Or, if it be

* Per substantiam intelligo id, quod in se est, & per se concipitur; hoc est, id cujus conceptus non indiget conceptu alterius rei, a quo formari debeat. *Definitio 3.* Which, presently after, he thus explains: Ad naturam substantiæ pertinet existere; hoc est, ipsius essentia involvit necessariò existentiam. *Ethic. Par. I. Prop. 7.*

pages 24 & 41. true, then neither *Matter* nor *Spirit*, nor any *Finite Being* whatsoever, (as has been before shewn) is in That Sense properly a *Substance*, but (*the ó ων*) the *Self-Existent Being* alone: And so it will prove nothing (notwithstanding all his *Show* and *Form* of Demonstration) to his main Purpose, which was to make us believe that there is no such Thing as

† Res nullo alio modo, neq; alio ordine a Deo produci potuerunt, quam productæ sunt. *Prop. 33.*

Power or *Liberty* in the Universe, but that † every particular Thing in the World is by an *Absolute Necessity* just what it is, and could not possibly have been in any Re-

spect otherwise. Supposing, I say, his Definition of Substance to be *true*; yet even *That* would really conclude nothing to his main Purpose concerning the *Necessity* of all Things. For since, according to That Definition, neither *Matter* nor *Spirit*, nor any *Finite Beings* whatsoever, are *Substances*, but only *Modes*;

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Modes ; How will it follow, that, because *Substance* is Self-Existent, therefore all these *Modes* are so too?

Why, because * *from an Infinite Cause, Infinite Effects must needs follow.* Very true ; *supposing That Infinite Self-Existent Cause, not to be a Voluntary, but a mere Necessary Agent, that is, no Agent at all* : Which Supposition (*in the present Argument*) is the Question begged ; And what he afterwards attempts to alledge in Proof of it, shall afterwards be considered in its proper Place.

* *Ex Necessitate Divinae Naturæ, infinita infinitis modis (hoc est, omnia quæ sub intellectum infinitum cadere possunt) sequi debent. Prop. 16.*

VIII. *The Self-Existent and Original Cause of all Things must be an Intelligent Being.* In this Proposition lies the main Question between us and the Atheists. For, that Something must be Self-Existent ; and that That which is Self-Existent, must necessarily be Eternal and Infinite and the Original Cause of all Things ; will not bear much Dispute. But all Atheists, whether they hold the World to be *of itself* Eternal both as to the Matter and Form, or whether they hold the Matter only to be Necessary and the Form Contingent, or whatever Hypothesis they frame ; have always asserted, and must maintain, either directly or indirectly, that the Self-Existent Being is not an *Intelligent Being*, but either pure unactive *Matter*, or (which in other Words is the very same Thing) a mere *necessary Agent*. For a mere *necessary Agent* must of Necessity either be plainly and directly in the grossest Sense *Unintelligent* ; which was the antient Atheists Notion of the Self-Existent Being : Or else its Intelligence (which is the Assertion of *Spinoza* and some Moderns) must be wholly separate from any Power of Will and Choice ; which, in respect of any Excellency and Perfection, or indeed to any common Sense, is the very same Thing as no Intelligence at all.

That the Self-Existent Being must be Intelligent.

Now

A Demonstration of the

Now that the Self-Existent Being is not such a Blind and *Unintelligent* Necessity, but in the most proper Sense an *understanding* and *purely active* Being; cannot indeed be demonstrated strictly and properly *a priori*; because (through the Imperfection of our Faculties) we know not *wherein* Intelligence consists, nor can see the Immediate and Necessary Connexion of it with Self-Existence, as we can that of Eternity, Infinity, Unity, &c. But, *a posteriori*, almost every Thing in the World demonstrates to us this great Truth; and affords undeniable Arguments, to prove that the World, and all Things therein, are the Effects of an *Intelligent* and *Knowing* Cause.

*Proved
from the
Degrees of
Perfection
in Things,
and the
Order of
Causes and
Effects.*

And 1st. Since in general there are manifestly in Things *various Kinds* of Powers, and very *different Excellencies* and Degrees of Perfection, it must needs be, that, in the Order of Causes and Effects, the Cause must always be more Excellent than the Effect: And consequently the Self-Existent Being, whatever That be supposed to be, must of Necessity (being the Original of all Things) contain in itself the Sum and highest Degree of all the Perfections of all Things. Not because That which is Self-Existent, must *therefore* have all possible Perfections: (For This, though most certainly true in itself, yet cannot be so clearly demonstrated *a priori*;) But because 'tis impossible that any Effect should have any Perfection, which was not in the Cause. For, if it had, then That Perfection would be caused by nothing; which is a plain Contradiction. Now an *Unintelligent* Being, 'tis evident, cannot be endued with all the Perfections of all Things in the World; because *Intelligence* is one of those Perfections. All Things therefore cannot arise from an Unintelligent Original: And consequently the Self-Existent Being must of Necessity be *Intelligent*.

There

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There is no Possibility for an Atheist to avoid the Force of this Argument any other Way, than by asserting one of these *two* Things: Either that there is *no Intelligent Being at all* in the Universe; or that *Intelligence is no distinct Perfection*, but merely a Composition of Figure and Motion, as Colour and Sounds are vulgarly supposed to be. Of the *Former* of these Assertions every Man's own *Consciousness* is an abundant Confutation. For they who contend that Beasts are mere Machines, have yet never presumed to conjecture that *Men* are so too. And that the *Latter* Assertion (in which the main Strength of Atheism lies) is most absurd and impossible; shall be shewn presently. Though if That Assertion *could* be supposed to be *True*, yet even *still* 'twould unavoidably follow, that the Self-Existing Being must needs be *Intelligent*; as shall be proved in my *4th Argument* upon this present Head. In the mean Time; that the Assertion itself, *viz.* that *Intelligence* is not any *distinct Perfection*, properly speaking, but merely a Composition of Unintelligent Figure and Motion; that this Assertion, I say, is most absurd and impossible, will appear from what shall be said in the ensuing Argument.

2dly. Since in *Men in particular* there is undeniably that Power which we call Thought, *Intelligence*, Consciousness, Perception, or Knowledge; there must of Necessity *either* have been from Eternity, *without any Original Cause at all*, an infinite Succession of Men, whereof *no one* has had a *Necessary*, but *every one* a *Dependent and Communicated* Being; or *else* these Beings, indued with Perception and Consciousness, must at some Time or other have arisen purely out of that which had no such Quality as Sense, Perception, or Consciousness; or *else* they must have been produced by some *Intelligent Superior Being*. There never was nor can be any Atheist whatsoever, that can deny but One of these *Three*

From the
Intelli-
gence that
is in crea-
ted Beings.

E

Suppositions

A Demonstration of the

page 11,
&c.

Suppositions *must* be the Truth. If therefore the *two former* can be proved to be false and impossible, the *latter* must be owned to be demonstrably true. Now that the *First* is impossible, is evident from what has been already said in Proof of the *Second* General Head of this Discourse. And that the *Second* is likewise impossible, may be thus demonstrated: *If Perception or Intelligence be a distinct Quality or Perfection, and not a mere Effect or Composition of Unintelligent Figure and Motion; then Beings, indued with Perception or Consciousness, can never have arisen purely out of that which had no such Quality as Perception or Consciousness; because nothing can ever give to another any Perfection which it hath not either actually in itself, or at least in a higher Degree. But Perception or Intelligence is a distinct Quality or Perfection, and not a mere Effect or Composition of Unintelligent Figure and Motion.*

First, If Perception or Intelligence be any real distinct Quality or Perfection; and not a mere Effect or Composition of Unintelligent Figure and Motion; then Beings, indued with Perception or Consciousness, can never possibly have arisen purely out of that which itself had no such Quality as Perception or Consciousness; because nothing can ever give to another any Perfection which it hath not either actually in itself, or at least in a higher Degree. This is very evident; because, if any Thing could give to another any Perfection which it has not itself, That Perfection would be caused absolutely by Nothing; which is a plain Contradiction. If any one here replies, (as Mr. Gildon has done in a Letter to Mr. Blount) that Colours, Sounds, Tastes, and the like, arise from Figure and Motion, which have no such Qualities in themselves; or that Figure, Divisibility, Mobility,*

* Oracles of Reason, p. 186.
See also my Letter to Mr. Dodwell, with several Answers and Replies concerning the Natural Immortality of the Soul.

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Mobility, and other Qualities of Matter, are confessed to be given from God, who yet cannot, without extreme Blasphemy, be said to have any such Qualities himself; and that therefore, in like Manner, *Perception* or **Intelligence* may arise out of that which has no Intelligence itself: The Answer is very easy: *First*, that *Colours*, *Sounds*, *Tastes*, and the like, are by no Means Effects arising from mere Figure and Motion; there being nothing in the Bodies themselves, the Objects of the Senses, that has any Manner of Similitude to any of these Qualities; but they are plainly *Thoughts* or Modifications of the Mind itself, which is an Intelligent Being; and are not properly *Caused*, but only *Occasioned*, by the Impressions of Figure and Motion. Nor will it at all help an Atheist, (as to the *present Question*) though we should here make for him (that we may allow him the greatest possible Advantage) even that most absurd Supposition, that the *Mind itself* is nothing but mere Matter, and not at all an Immaterial Substance. For, even supposing it to be *mere Matter*, yet he must needs confess it to be *such Matter*, as is indued not only with Figure and Motion, but also with the Quality of Intelligence and Perception: And consequently, as to the *present Question*, it will still come to the same Thing; that Colours, Sounds, and the like, which are not Qualities of Unintelligent Bodies, but Perceptions of Mind, can no more be caused by, or arise from, mere Unintelligent Figure and Motion, than Colour can be a Triangle, or Sound a Square, or Something be caused by Nothing. *Secondly*, as to the *other Part* of the Objection; that *Figure*, *Divisibility*, *Mobility*, and other Qualities of Matter,

* If with one of Cicero's Dialogists they would infer that the Whole [of the World] must have Understanding, because some Portions of it are Intelligent;—we may retort with the other Speaker in Cicero, that, by the same Argument, the Whole must be a Courtier, a Musician, a Dancing-Master, or a Philosopher, because many of the Parts are such. Mr. Toland's Letter; Motion essential to Matter.

A Demonstration of the

are (as we ourselves acknowledge) given it from God, who yet cannot, without extreme Blasphemy, be said to have any such Qualities himself; and that therefore, in like Manner, *Perception* or *Intelligence* may arise out of that which has no Intelligence itself: The Answer is still easier: That Figure, Divisibility, Mobility, and other such-like Qualities of Matter, are not real, proper, distinct, and *Positive Powers*, but only *Negative* Qualities, Deficiencies, or Imperfections. And, though no Cause can communicate to its Effect any real Perfection which it has not itself, yet the Effect may easily have many Imperfections, Deficiencies, or Negative Qualities, which are not in the Cause. Though therefore *Figure*, *Divisibility*, *Mobility*, and the like, (which are mere Negations, as all *Limitations* and all *Defects of Powers* are) may be in the Effect, and not in the Cause; yet *Intelligence* (which I now suppose, and shall prove immediately, to be a *distinct* Quality; and which no Man can say is a *mere Negation*) cannot possibly be so.

Having therefore thus demonstrated, that *If Perception* or *Intelligence* be supposed to be a *distinct Quality* or *Perfection*, (though even but of *Matter* only, if the Atheist pleases) and not a mere Effect or Composition of Unintelligent Figure and Motion; then Beings indued with Perception or Consciousness can never have arisen purely out of that which had no such Quality as Perception or Consciousness; because nothing can ever give to another any Perfection which it has not itself: It will easily appear, *Secondly*, that *Perception* or *Intelligence* Is really such a *distinct Quality* or *Perfection*, and not possibly a mere Effect or Composition of Unintelligent Figure and Motion: And That for this plain Reason; because Intelligence is not Figure, and Consciousness is not Motion. For whatever can arise from, or be compounded of any Things; is still only those very Things, of which it

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it was compounded. And if infinite Compositions or Divisions be made eternally; the Things will still be but eternally the same. And all their possible Effects can never be any Thing but Repetitions of the same. For Instance: All possible Changes, Compositions, or Divisions of *Figure*, are still nothing but *Figure*: And all possible Compositions or Effects of *Motion* can eternally be nothing but mere *Motion*. If therefore there ever was a Time when there was nothing in the Universe but Matter and Motion, there never could have been any Thing else therein but Matter and Motion. And it would have been as impossible there should ever have Existed any such Thing as Intelligence or Consciousness; or even any such Thing as Light, or Heat, or Sound, or Colour, or any of those we call Secondary Qualities of Matter; as 'tis now impossible for Motion to be Blue or Red, or for a Triangle to be transformed into a Sound. That which has been apt to deceive Men in this Matter, is This; that they imagine Compounds to be somewhat really different from That of which they are Compounded: Which is a very great Mistake. For all the Things, of which Men so judge, either, if they be *really different*, are not Compounds nor Effects of what Men judge them to be, but are something totally distinct; as when the Vulgar thinks Colours and Sounds to be Properties inherent in Bodies, when indeed they are purely Thoughts of the Mind: Or else, if they be really Compounds and Effects, then they are *not different*, but exactly the same that ever they were; as, when two Triangles put together make a Square, That Square is still nothing but two Triangles; or, when a Square cut in Halves makes two Triangles, those two Triangles are still only the two Halves of a Square; or, when the Mixture of Blue and Yellow Powder makes a Green, That Green is still nothing

but Blue and Yellow intermixed, as is plainly visible by the Help of Microscopes. And, in short, every Thing by Composition, Division, or Motion, is nothing else but the very same it was before, taken either in Whole or by Parts, or in different Place or Order. Mr. *Hobbs* seems to have been aware of this: And therefore, though he is very sparing, and as it were ashamed to speak out; yet finding himself pressed, in his own Mind, with the Difficulty arising from the Impossibility of Sense or Consciousness being merely the Effect of Figure and Motion; and it not serving *His* Purpose at all (were the Thing never so possible) to suppose that God, by an immediate and voluntary Act of his *Almighty Power*, indues certain Systems of Matter with Consciousness

* See my Letter to Mr. Dodwell, with the Four Defences of it.

† Scio fuisse Philosophos quosdam, eosdemque viros doctos, qui corpora omnia Sensu prædita esse sustinuerunt: Nec video, si natura sensationis in reactione sola collocaretur, quomodo refutari possint. Sed etsi ex reactione etiam corporum aliorum, phantasma aliquod nasceretur; illud tamen, remoto objecto, statim cessaret. Nam nisi ad retinendum Motum impressum, etiam remoto objecto, apta habeant Organa, ut habent Animalia; ita tantum sentient, ut nunquam sensisse se recordentur. — Sensationi ergo, quæ vulgo ita appellatur, necessario adhæret memoria aliqua, &c. *Hobbs Physic. Cap. 25. Sect. 5.* See also No. 2 & 11 of the Appendix to a Collection of Papers which passed between Mr. Leibnitz and Dr. Clarke.

and Thought, (* of which Opinion I shall have Occasion to speak something more hereafter;) he is forced † to have Recourse to that prodigiously absurd Supposition, that All Matter, as Matter, is indued not only with Figure and a Capacity of Motion, but also with an actual Sense or Perception; and wants only the Organs and Memory of Animals, to express its Sensation.

From the
Beauty,
Order, and
final Causes
of Things.

3dly. That the Self-Existent and Original Cause of all Things is an *Intelligent Being*; appears abundantly from the excellent *Variety, Order, Beauty, and Wonderful Contrivance, and Fitness of all Things in the World, to their proper and respective Ends.*

This

Being and Attributes of God.

This Argument has been so Learnedly and Fully handled both by Ancient and Modern Writers, that I do but just mention it, without enlarging at all upon it. I shall only at this Time make this One Observation; That, whereas *Des Cartes* and Others have endeavoured to give a *Possible* Account (*Possible*, did I say? nay, indeed, a most *impossible* and *ridiculous* Account) how the *World* might be formed by the Necessary Laws of Motion alone; they have, by so seemingly vast an Undertaking, really meant no more, than to explain philosophically how the *inanimate* Part, that is, infinitely the least considerable Part of the World, might possibly have been framed. For, as to *Plants* and *Animals*, in which the Wisdom of the Creator principally appears, they have never in any tolerable Manner, or with any the least Appearance of Success, pretended to give an Account how *They* were originally Formed. In These Things, Matter and the Laws of Motion are able to do nothing at all. And how ridiculous the Epicurean Hypothesis is, of the Earth producing them all at first by Chance; (besides that, I think, it is now given up even by all Atheists;) appears from the late Discovery made in Philosophy, that there is no such Thing as equivocal Generation of any the meanest Animal or Plant; the Sun, and Earth, and Water, and all the Powers of Nature in Conjunction, being able to do nothing at all towards the producing any Thing indued with so much as even a Vegetable Life. (From which most excellent Discovery, we may, *by the Way*, observe the Usefulness of Natural and Experimental Philosophy, sometimes even in Matters of Religion.) Since therefore Things are thus, it must unavoidably be granted, (even by the most obstinate Atheist) either that all Plants and Animals are originally the Work of an *Intelligent* Being, and Created by him *in Time*; or that, having been from Eternity in the same Order and Method

Be it
final Cau-
ses; and
Mr. Ray,
of the Wis-
dom of God
in the
Creation;
and Mr.
Derham's
Physico-
Theology.

A Demonstration of the

they now are in, they are an Eternal Effect of an *Eternal Intelligent* Cause continually exerting his infinite Power and Wisdom; or else that, without any Self-Existent-Original at all, they have been derived one from another in an Eternal Succession, by an Infinite Progress of Dependent Causes. The *first* of these three Ways is the Conclusion *we* assert: The *second* (so far as the Cause of Atheism is concerned) comes to the very same Thing: And the *third* I have already shewn (in my Proof of the Second General Head of this Discourse) to be absolutely Impossible and a Contradiction.

page 11,
&c.

From the
Original of
Motion.

4thly. Supposing it was possible that the Form of the World, and all the Visible Things contained therein, with the Order, Beauty, and exquisite Fiteness of their Parts; nay, supposing that even Intelligence itself, with Consciousness and Thought, in all the Beings we know, could possibly be the Result or Effect of mere Unintelligent Matter, Figure, and Motion; (which is the most unreasonable and impossible Supposition in the World :) Yet even still there would remain an undeniable Demonstration, that the Self-Existent Being (whatever it be supposed to be) must be *Intelligent*. For even these Principles themselves (*Unintelligent Figure and Motion*) could never have possibly Existed, without there had been before them an *Intelligent* Cause. I instance in *Motion*. 'Tis evident there is Now such a Thing as *Motion* in the World: Which either began at some Time or other, or was Eternal. If it began at any Time, then the Question is granted, that the First Cause is an Intelligent Being: For mere Unintelligent Matter, and that at Rest, 'tis manifest could never of itself begin to move. On the contrary, if Motion was Eternal; it was either Eternally caused by some Eternal Intelligent Being; or it must of itself be Necessary and Self-Existent; or else, without any Necessity in its own Nature, and without

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without any External Necessary Cause, it must have Existed from Eternity by an Endless Successive Communication. If Motion was Eternally caused by some Eternal Intelligent Being; this also is granting the Question, as to the present Dispute. If it was of itself Necessary and Self-Existent; then it follows, that it must be a Contradiction in Terms to suppose any Matter to be at Rest: And yet at the same Time, because the * *Determination* of this * *page 23.* Self-Existent Motion must be *every Way* at once, the Effect of it could be nothing else but a perpetual *Rest*. Besides (as there is no End of Absurdities when they once begin) it must also imply a Contradiction to suppose that there might *possibly* have been originally *more* or *less* Motion in the Universe than there *actually* was: Which is so very absurd a Consequence, that *Spinoza* himself, though he expressly asserts all Things to be *Necessary*, yet seems ashamed here * to speak out his Opinion, or rather plainly contradicts himself in the Question about the Original of Motion. But if it be said, lastly, that Motion, without any *Necessity* in its own Nature, and without any External Necessary Cause, has Existed from Eternity, merely by an Endless Successive Communication; as † *Spinoza*, inconsistently enough, seems to assert: This I have before shewn (in my Proof of the ‡ *Second* General Proposition of this Discourse) to be a plain Contradiction. It remains therefore, that Motion must of Necessity be Originally Caused by Something that is Intelligent; or else there never could have been any such Thing as Motion in the World. And consequently the Self-Existent Being, the Original Cause of all Things, (whatever it be supposed to be) must of Necessity be an *Intelligent Being*.

* Spinozæ Ethic. Par. I. Prop. 33. compared with Par. II. Prop. 13. Lemma 3.

† Corpus motum, vel quiescens, ad motum vel quietem determinari debuit ab alio corpore, quod etiam ad motum vel quietem determinatum fuit ab alio, & illud iterum ab alio, & sic in infinitum. Ethic. Par. II. Prop. 13. Lemma 3.

‡ *page 11.*
Etc.

From

A Demonstration of the

From hence it follows again, that the *Material World* cannot possibly be the Original Self-Existent Being. For since the Self-Existent Being is demonstrated to be Intelligent; and the Material World plainly is not so; it follows that the Material World cannot possibly be Self-Existent. What Some have fondly imagined concerning a *Soul of the World*; if thereby they mean a Created Dependent Being; signifies nothing in the present Argument. But if they understand thereby Something Necessary and Self-Existent; then it is nothing else but a false, corrupt, and imperfect Notion of *God*.

That the Self-Existent Being must be a Free Agent.

IX. *The Self-Existent and Original Cause of all Things is not a necessary Agent, but a Being indued with Liberty and Choice.* The contrary to this Proposition, is the Foundation and the Sum of what *Spinoza* and his Followers have asserted concerning the Nature of *God*. What Reasons or Arguments they have offered for their Opinion, I shall have Occasion to consider briefly in my Proof of the Proposition itself. The Truth of which appears

This is a necessary Consequence of the foregoing Proposition.

1st. In that it is a Necessary Consequence of the foregoing Proposition. For *Intelligence* without *Liberty* (as I there hinted) is really (in respect of any Power, Excellence, or Perfection) *no Intelligence* at all. It is indeed a *Consciousness*, but it is merely a *Passive One*; a *Consciousness*, not of Acting, but purely of being Acted upon. Without *Liberty*, nothing can in any tolerable Propriety of Speech, be said to be an Agent or Cause of any Thing. For to Act necessarily is really and properly not to Act at all, but only to be Acted upon. What therefore *Spinoza* and his Followers assert concerning the

*Ex Necessitate Divinae Naturæ, infinita infinitis modis sequi debent. *Ethic. Par. I. Prop. 16.*

Production of all Things * from the Necessity of the Divine Nature, is mere Jargon and Words without any Meaning at all. For

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For if, by the Necessity of the Divine Nature, they understand not the Perfection and Rectitude of his Will, whereby God is unalterably determined to do always what is best in the Whole; (as confessedly they do not; because this is consistent with the most perfect Liberty and Choice;) but, on the contrary, mean an Absolute and strictly Natural Necessity: It follows evidently, that when they say, God, by the Necessity of his Nature, is the Cause and Author of all Things; they understand him to be a Cause or Agent in no other Sense, than as if a Man should say, that a Stone, by the Necessity of its Nature, is the Cause of its own falling and striking the Ground: Which is really not to be an Agent or Cause at all: But their Opinion amounts to this, that all Things are equally Self-Existent, and consequently that the Material World is God: Which I have before proved to be a Contradiction. In like Manner, when they speak of the Intelligence and Knowledge of God; they mean to attribute these Powers to him in no other Sense, than the ancient *Hylozoics* attributed them to *all Matter*; that is, that a Stone, when it falls, has a Sensation and Consciousness; but That Consciousness is no Cause at all, or Power, of Acting. Which Kind of Intelligence, in any tolerable Propriety of Speech, is no Intelligence at all. And consequently the Arguments, that proved the Supreme Cause to be *properly* an Intelligent and Active Being; do also undeniably prove that he is likewise indued with *Liberty* and Choice, which alone is the Power of Acting.

See a very remarkable Passage of Mr. Hobbs, cited above, page 54.

2dly. If the Supreme Cause is not a Being indued with *Liberty* and Choice, but a mere Necessary Agent, whose Actions are all as absolutely and naturally Necessary as his Existence: Then it will follow, that nothing which is not could *possibly* have been; and that nothing which is could *possibly* not have been;

Proved further from the Arbitrary Disposition of Things in the World;

A Demonstration of the

been ; and that no Mode or Circumstance of the
Existence of any Thing could *possibly* have been in
any Respect otherwise than it now actually is. All
which being evidently most false and absurd ; it
follows, on the contrary, that the Supreme Cause
is not a mere necessary Agent, but a Being indued
with Liberty and Choice.

See to
Spinoza's
Arguments
for the Ne-
cessity of all
Things.

* Alii putant Deum esse cau-
sam liberam, propterea quod
potest, ut putant, efficere ut
ea quæ ex ejus natura sequi
diximus, hoc est, quæ *in ejus
potestate sunt*, non fiant ; Sed
hoc idem est ac si dicerent
quod Deus potest efficere, ut
ex natura trianguli non sequa-
tur, ejus tres angulos æquales
esse duobus rectis.—Ego me
satis clare ostendisse puto, a
summa Dei potentia *omnia* ne-
cessario effluxisse, vel semper
eadem necessitate sequi ; eodem
modo ac ex natura trianguli ab
æterno & in æternum sequitur,
ejus tres angulos æquari duo-
bus rectis. *Ethic. Par. I.
Schol. ad Prop. 17.*

Omnia ex necessitate naturæ
divinæ determinata sunt, non
tantum ad existendum, sed
etiam ad certo modo existen-
dum & operandum ; nullumq;
datur contingens. *Demonstrat.
Prop. 29.*

Si res alterius naturæ potuissent esse, vel alio modo ad operandum deter-
minari, ut naturæ ordo alius esset : Ergo Dei etiam natura alia posset esse
quam jam est. *Prop. 33. Demonstrat.*

Quicquid concipimus in Dei potestate esse, id necessario est. *Prop. 35.*
Deum non operari ex libertate voluntatis. *Corol. ad Prop. 32.*

Res nullo alio modo neq; alio ordine a Deo produci potuerunt, quam
productæ sunt. *Prop. 33.*

† Ex necessitate divinæ naturæ, infinita infinitis modis sequi debent.
Prop. 16.

‡ Si res alterius naturæ potuissent esse, vel alio modo ad operandum
determinari, ut naturæ ordo alius esset : Ergo Dei etiam natura alia posset
esse quam jam est. *Prop. 33. Demonstrat.*

The * *Consequence* ; viz. That, if
the Supreme Cause be a Necessary
Agent, then nothing which is not
could *possibly* have been ; and no-
thing which is could *possibly* either
not have been, or have been dif-
ferent from what 'tis : This, I say,
is expressly owned by *Spinoza* to
be the unavoidable Consequence
of his own Opinion. And accord-
ingly he endeavours to maintain,
that *no Thing, or Mode of Existence
of any Thing, could possibly have
been in any Respect different from
what it now actually is.* His Reasons
are ; (1.) because, † *from an infi-
nitely perfect Nature, infinite Things,
in infinite Manners, must needs pro-
ceed* ; and (2.) ‡ *because, if any Thing
could possibly be otherwise than it is,
the Will and Nature of God must
be supposed capable of Change ; and*
(3.)

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(3.) * because if all possible Things, in all possible Manners, do not always and necessarily Exist, they never can All Exist; but some Things, that do not Exist, will still always be possible only, and never can actually Exist; and so the actual Omnipotence of God is taken away. The First of these Arguments is a plain Begging of the Question. For, that an infinitely perfect Nature is able indeed to produce infinite Things, in infinite Manners, is certainly true: But that it *Must* always actually do so, by an *absolute Necessity of Nature*, without any Power of Choice, either as to Time, or Manner, or Circumstances; does by no Means follow from the Perfection of its Nature, unless it be first *supposed* to be a *Necessary Agent*: Which is the very Question begged, that was to be proved. The *Second* Argument is (if possible) still weaker: For how does it follow, if God, according to his Eternal unerring Purpose and infinite Wisdom, produces different Things, at different Times, and in different Manners; that therefore the Will and Nature of God is changeable? It might exactly as well be argued, that if God (according to *Spinoza's* Supposition) does *Always* necessarily produce all possible *Differences* and *Varieties* of Things; therefore his Will and Nature is *Always* necessarily infinitely *various*, *unequal*, and *dissimilar to itself*. And as to the *Third* Argument, (which is mere Metaphysical Trifling) it is just such Reasoning as if a Man should argue, that, if all possible [Eternal] Duration be not Always actually Exhausted, it never can be All Exhausted; and that therefore so the Eternity of God is taken away. Which Sort of arguing, every one, at first Sight, discerns the Weakness of.

* Immo adversari-
gant ex necessitate divi-
turæ omnia necessario fluere,
Dei omnipotentiam negare vi-
dentur. Coguntur enim fateri,
Deum infinita creabilia intel-
ligere, quæ tamen nunquam
creare poterit. Nam alias, si
scilicet omnia, quæ intelligit,
crearet; suam, juxta iplos,
exauriret omnipotentiam, &
se imperfectum redderet. Ut
igitur Deum perfectum statu-
ant, eo rediguntur, ut simul
statuere debeant, ipsum non
posse omnia efficere, ad quæ
ejus potentia se extendit. *Co-
rol. ad Prop. 17.*

But

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But whatever the Arguments were, and if they were never so much more plausible than they really are; Yet the *Affertion* itself, [*viz.*] *That no Thing, or Mode of Existence of any Thing, could possibly have been made in any Respect different from what it actually is*; is so palpably absurd and false, so contradictory to Experience and the Nature of Things, and to the most obvious and common Reason of Mankind; that of itself it immediately, and upon the first Hearing, sufficiently confutes any Principle of which it is a Consequence. For all Things in the World appear plainly to be the most *Arbitrary* that can be imagined; and to be wholly the Effects, not of *Necessity*, but of Wisdom and Choice. A *Necessity* indeed of *Fitness*; that is, that Things could not have been otherwise than they are, without diminishing the Beauty, Order, and Well-being of the Whole; there may be, and (as far as we can apprehend) there certainly is. But this is so far from serving our Adversaries Purpose, that, on the contrary, 'tis a direct Demonstration that all Things were made and ordered by a *Free* and a *Wise* Agent. That therefore which I affirm, contradictory to *Spinoza's* Affertion, is, that there is not the least Appearance of an *Absolute Necessity of Nature*, (so as that any Variation would imply a Contradiction) in any of these Things. *Motion* itself, and all its Quantities and Directions, with the Laws of *Gravitation*, are intirely Arbitrary; and might possibly have been altogether different from what they now are. The *Number* and *Motion* of the *Heavenly Bodies* have no Manner of Necessity in the Nature of the Things themselves. The *Number* of the Planets might have been greater or less. Their *Motion* upon their own Axis might have been in any Proportion swifter or slower than it now is. And the *Direction* of all their progressive Motions, both of the primary and secondary Planets, uniformly from West to East, (when

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(when by * the Motion of *Comets* it appears there was no Necessity, but that they might as easily have moved in all imaginable transverse Directions) is an evident Proof that these Things are solely the Effect of Wisdom and Choice. There is not the least Appearance of Necessity, but that all these Things *might* possibly have been infinitely varied from their present Constitution: And (as the late Improvements in Astronomy discover) they *are* actually liable to very great Changes. Every Thing upon *Earth* is still more evidently arbitrary; and plainly the Product, not of Necessity, but of Will. What absolute Necessity for just such a Number of *Species of Animals or Plants?* or who without blushing dare affirm, that † neither the Form, nor Order, nor any the minutest Circumstance or Mode of Existence of any of these Things, could *possibly* have been in the least diversified by the Supreme Cause?

To give but one *Instance*. In all the greater Species of Animals, Where was the Necessity for that ‡ Conformity we observe in the Number and Likeness of all their Principal Members? and How would it have been a Contradiction to suppose any or all of them varied from what they now are? To suppose indeed the Continuance of *such Monsters* as *Lucretius* imagines to have perished for Want of their principal Organs of Life; is really a Contradiction. But how would it have been a Contradiction for a whole Species of *Horses* or *Oxen* to have subsisted with *Six Legs*, or *Four Eyes*?

But

* Nam dum cometæ nuntur in orbibus valde eccentricis, undiq; & quoquoeversum in omnes cœli partes; utiq; nullo modo fieri potuit, ut cæco fato tribuendum sit, quod planetæ in orbibus concentricis motu consimili ferantur eodem omnes.—Tam miram uniformitatem in planetarum systemate, necessario fatendum est intelligentia & consilio fuisse effectam. *Newton, Optic. page 345.*

† Res nullo alio modo, neq; alio ordine a Deo produci potuerunt, quam productæ sunt. *Spinoza, ut supra.*

‡ Idemq; dici possit de uniformitate illa, quæ est in corporibus animalium: *viz.* Necessario fatendum est, intelligentia & consilio fuisse effectam. *Newton. Optic. page 346.*

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But 'tis a Shame to insist longer upon so plain an Argument.

It might have been objected with much more Plausibleness, that the Supreme Cause cannot be *Free*, because he must needs do always what is Best in the Whole. But this would not at all serve *Spinoza's* Purpose. For this is a Necessity, not of Nature and Fate, but of Fitness and Wisdom; a Necessity consistent with the greatest Freedom and most perfect Choice. For the only Foundation of this Necessity is such an unalterable Rectitude of Will, and Perfection of Wisdom, as makes it impossible for a Wise Being to resolve to Act foolishly; or for a Nature infinitely Good to chuse to do that which is Evil. *Of which I shall have Occasion to speak more hereafter, when I come to deduce the Moral Attributes of God.*

The same proved also from Final Causes. 3dly. If there be any Final Cause of any Thing in the Universe; then the Supreme Cause is not a Necessary, but a Free Agent. This Consequence also *Spinoza* acknowledges to be unavoidable. And therefore he has no other Way left, but with a

* Naturam finem nullum sibi præfixum habere; & omnes causas finales, nihil nisi humana esse figmenta. *Appendix ad Prop. 36.*

† Oculos ad videndum, dentes ad masticandum, herbas & animantia ad alimentum, solem ad illuminandum, mare ad alendum pisces, &c. *Ibid.*

Nullas unquam rationes circa res naturales a fine, quem Deus aut Natura in iis faciendis sibi proposuit, desumemus. *Cartes, Princip. Par. I, §. 28.*

strange Confidence to * expose all Final Causes, as the Fictions of ignorant and superstitious Men: And to † laugh at those who are so foolish and childish as to fancy, that *Eyes* were designed and fitted to see with, *Teeth* to chew with, *Food* to be eaten for Nourishment, the *Sun* to give *Light*, &c. I suppose it will not be thought, that, when once a Man comes to this, he is to be disputed with any longer.

Whoever pleases, may, for Satisfaction on this Head, consult *Galen de Ufu Partium*, *Tully de Natura Deorum*, *Mr. Boyle of Final Causes*, and *Mr. Ray of the Wisdom of God in the Creation*.

I shall

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I shall only observe this One Thing; that the larger the Improvements and Discoveries are, which are daily made in Astronomy and Natural Philosophy; the more clearly is this Question continually determined, to the Shame and Confusion of Atheists.

4thly. If the Supreme Cause be a mere Necessary Agent, 'tis impossible *Any Effect* or Product of That Cause should be *Finite*. For since that which acts necessarily, cannot govern or direct its own Action; but must necessarily produce whatever can be the Effect or Product of its Nature: 'Tis plain every Effect of such an Infinite Uniform Nature, acting every-where necessarily alike, must of Necessity be Immense, or Infinite in Extension: And so no Creature in the Universe could possibly be *Finite*: Which is infinitely absurd and contrary to Experience. *Spinoza*, to shuffle off this Absurdity, expresses the Consequence of his Doctrine thus:

That * *from the Necessity of the Divine Nature, infinite Things*, (meaning infinite in Number) *in infinite Manners, must needs follow*. But

* Ex necessitate Divinae naturae, infinita infinitis modis sequi debent. *Ethic. Par. I. Prop. 16.*

whoever reads his Demonstration of this Proposition, can hardly fail to observe, (if he be at all used to such Speculations) that, if it proved any Thing at all, it would equally prove, that, *from the Necessity of the Divine Nature, only Infinite Things* (meaning Infinite in Extension) *can possibly arise*. Which Demonstration alone is a sufficient Confutation of the Opinion it was designed to establish.

5thly. If the Supreme Cause be not a *Free* and Voluntary Agent, then in every Effect (for Instance, in Motion) there must have been a Progression of Causes *in infinitum*, without any Original Cause at all. For if there be no *Liberty* any-where; then there is no Agent; no Cause, Mover, Principle, or Beginning of Motion any-where. Every Thing in the Universe must be *Passive*, and nothing *Active*: Every Thing *Moved*, and no *Mover*: Every Thing *Effect*, and nothing

From the Finiteness of Created Beings.

And from the Impossibility of an Infinite Succession of Causes.

nothing Cause. Spinoza indeed (as has been already observed) refers all Things to *the Necessity of the Divine Nature*, as their real Cause and Original: But this is mere Jargon, and Words without any Signification; and will not at all help him over the present Difficulty. For if, by Things Existing through *the Necessity of the Divine Nature*, he means *Absolutely a Necessity of Existence*; so as to make the World, and every Thing in it, *Self-Existent*; then it follows, (as I have before shewn) that it must be a Contradiction in Terms to suppose *Motion, &c.* not to Exist: Which Spinoza himself is ashamed to assert. But if therefore, by the *Necessity of the Divine Nature*, he means only the *Necessary Following of an Effect from its Cause*; or, *the Cause Necessarily producing its Effect*; this Necessity must still always be determined by something antecedent, and so on infinitely. And this Spinoza (though sometimes he seems to mean the other and equally absurd Sense) expressly owns in some Places to be his Meaning.

* Unaquæq; volitio non potest existere, neq; ad operandum determinari; nisi ab alia causa determinetur, & hæc rursus ab alia; & sic porro in infinitum. *Prop. 33. Demonstr.*

† Voluntas ad Dei naturam non magis pertinet, quam reliqua naturalia; sed ad ipsam eodem modo sese habet, ut motus & quies.

Deus non magis dici potest ex libertate voluntatis agere, quam dici potest ex libertate motus & quietis agere. *Corol. ad Prop. 32.*

‡ Corpus motum vel quiescens, ad motum vel quietem determinari debuit ab alio corpore, quod etiam ad motum vel quietem determinatum fuit ab alio; & illud iterum ab alio; & sic in infinitum. *Ethic. Par. II. Prop. 13. Lemma 3.*

* *There can be no Volition*, saith he, *but from some Cause, which Cause must likewise be caused by some other Cause, and so on infinitely.* Again; † *Will*, saith he, *belongs to the Nature of God, no otherwise than Motion and Rest do: So that God can no more properly be said to act by the Liberty of his Will, than by the Liberty of Motion and Rest.* And what the Original of Motion and Rest is, he tells us in these Words: ‡ *Every Body in Motion, or at Rest, must have been determined to that Motion or Rest by some other Body, which must itself likewise have been determined by a third; and so on in infinitum.* And thus, since Motion is not in any one of its Stages of Communication

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Communication a Necessary Self-Existent Being, (because the Body moved may always, without a Contradiction, have been imagined to be at Rest, and is supposed not to have Motion from itself, but from another) the Opinion of *Spinoza* plainly recurs to an Infinite Succession of dependent Beings produced one from another in an endless Progression, without any Original Cause at all. Which Notion I have already ^{page 11,} (in the Proof of the second General Head of this ^{&c.} Discourse) demonstrated to imply a Contradiction. And since therefore there is no other possible Way to avoid this Absurdity, but by granting that there must be somewhere a Principle of Motion and Action, which is *Liberty*; I suppose it by this Time sufficiently proved, that the Supreme Cause must be a Being indued with *Liberty* and Choice.

From what has been said upon this Head, it sufficiently appears, that *Liberty* is not in itself, and in the very Notion of the Thing, an absolute Contradiction and Impossibility; as the Pleaders for Necessity and Fate contend that it is, and place the chief Strength of their Argument in that Supposition. *That Liberty is not in itself an impossible and contradictory Notion.*

For that which actually is, is certainly not impossible. And it has already been proved, that *Liberty* actually is; nay, that 'tis impossible for it not to be, in the First and Supreme Cause. The Principal Argument used by the Maintainers of Fate against the Possibility of *Liberty* is this: That, since every Thing must have a Cause, *every Volition or Determination of the Will of an Intelligent Being, must, as all other Things, arise from some Cause, and That Cause from some other Cause, and so on infinitely.

* Mens ad hoc vel illud volendum determinatur a causa, quæ etiam ab alia determinata est, & hæc iterum ab alia, & sic in infinitum. *Spinozæ Ethic. Par. II. Prop. 48.*

But now (besides that, in This Sort of Reasoning, these Men always ignorantly confound *Moral Motives* with *Physical Efficients*, between which Two Things there is no Manner of Relation: Besides This, I say)

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page 11,
Etc.

this very Argument really proves the direct contrary to what they intend. For since every Thing must indeed have a Cause of its Being either from without, or in the Necessity of its own Nature; and 'tis a plain Contradiction (as has already been demonstrated) to suppose an infinite Series of dependent Effects, none of which are Necessary in Themselves or Self-Existent; therefore 'tis impossible but there must be in the Universe some Being whose Existence is founded in the Necessity of its Own Nature; and which, being acted upon by Nothing beyond itself, must of Necessity have *in itself* a Principle of Acting, or Power of beginning Motion, which is the Idea of Liberty. 'Tis true, this Argument proves only the Liberty of the First and Supreme Cause, and extends not indeed to any Created Being: But it evinces in general, (which is sufficient to my present Purpose) that Liberty is so far from being impossible and contradictory in itself, that, on the contrary, 'tis impossible but that it must really *Be* somewhere: And this being once established, it will be easy to shew hereafter, that it is a Power capable of being communicated to Created Beings. Of which, in its proper Place.

*That the
Self-Existent
Being
must be All-
powerful.
page 44.*

X. *The Self-Existent Being, the Supreme Cause of all Things, must of Necessity have infinite Power.* This Proposition is evident and undeniable. For since nothing (as has been already proved) can possibly be Self-Existent besides himself; and consequently all Things in the Universe were made by Him, and are intirely dependent upon Him; and all the Powers of all Things are derived from Him, and must therefore be perfectly Subject and Subordinate to Him: 'Tis manifest that nothing can make any Difficulty or Resistance to the Execution of his Will; but he must of Necessity have absolute Power to do every Thing he pleases, with the perfectest Ease,

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Ease, and in the perfectest Manner, at once and in a Moment, whenever he Wills it. The Descriptions the Scripture gives of *this Power* are so lively and emphatical, that I cannot forbear mentioning one or two Passages. Thus *Job ix. 4.* *He is wise in Heart, and mighty in Strength;—which removeth the Mountains, and they know it not; which overturneth them in his Anger. Which shaketh the Earth out of her Place, and the Pillars thereof tremble. Which commandeth the Sun, and it riseth not; and sealeth up the Stars. Which alone spreadeth out the Heavens, and treadeth upon the Waters of the Sea. Which doth great Things past finding out, yea and Wonders without Number. Again; Hell is naked before Him, and Destruction hath no Covering. He stretcheth out the North over the empty Place, and hangeth the Earth upon nothing. He bindeth up the Waters in his thick Clouds, and the Cloud is not rent under them. The Pillars of Heaven tremble, and are astonished at his Reproof. He divideth the Sea with his Power, and by his Understanding he smiteth through the Proud. Lo! these are Part of his Ways, but how little a Portion is heard of him? But the Thunder of his Power who can understand? Job xxvi. 6. So likewise, *Isaiah xl. 12.* *Who has measured the Waters in the Hollow of his Hand, and meted out Heaven with the Span; and comprehended the Dust of the Earth in a Measure; and weighed the Mountains in Scales, and the Hills in a Balance. Behold! the Nations are as a Drop of the Bucket, and are counted as the small Dust of the Balance; behold! he taketh up the Isles as a very little Thing. All Nations before him are as nothing, and they are counted to him less than Nothing, and Vanity. To whom then will ye liken God, or what Likeness will ye compare unto him? But I do not urge Authority to the Persons I am at present speaking to. 'Tis sufficiently evident from Reason, that the Supreme Cause must of Necessity be Infinitely Powerful. The only Question is, What**

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the true Meaning of what we call *Infinite Power* is, and to *what Things* it must be understood to extend, or not to extend?

Now, in determining this Question, there are some Propositions, about which there is no Dispute, Which therefore I shall but just mention: As,

Of work-
ing Con-
tradictions.

1st. That Infinite Power reaches to all *Possible Things*, but cannot be said to extend to the working any Thing which implies a *Contradiction*: As, that a Thing should *be* and *not be* at the same Time; that the same Thing should *be made* and *not be made*, or *have been* and *not have been*; that *twice Two* should *not make Four*, or that *That which is necessarily False* should *be True*. The Reason whereof is plain: Because the Power of making a Thing to be at the same Time that it is not, is only a Power of doing that which is Nothing, that is, no Power at all.

Or Natu-
ral and
Moral
Evils.

2^{dly}. Infinite Power cannot be said to extend to those Things which imply *Natural Imperfection* in the Being to whom such Power is ascribed: As, that it should destroy its own Being, weaken itself, or the like. These Things imply *Natural Imperfection*, and are by all Men confessed to be such as cannot possibly belong to the Necessary Self-Existent Being. There are also other Things which imply Imperfection in another Kind, *viz. Moral Imperfection*: Concerning which, Atheism takes away the Subject of the Question, by denying wholly the Difference of Moral Good and Evil; and therefore I shall omit the Consideration of them, 'till I come to deduce the *Moral Attributes* of God.

But some other Instances there are in the Question about the Extent of *Infinite Power*, wherein the Principal Difference between us and the Atheists (next to the Question, Whether the Supreme Cause be an *Intelligent Being* or not?) does in great Measure consist. As,

1st. That

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1st. That Infinite Power includes a Power of *Creating Matter*. This has been constantly denied by all Atheists, both Ancient and Modern; and as constantly affirmed by all who believe the Being, and have just Notions of the Attributes of God. The only Reason which the Atheists have, or can pretend to alledge for their Opinion, is, that the Thing is in its own Nature absolutely *Impossible*. But how does it appear to be impossible? Why, only because They are not able to comprehend *How* it can be. For, to reduce it to a Contradiction, (which is the alone real Impossibility) this they are by no Means able to do. For to say that something which once was not, may since have begun to Exist, is neither directly, nor by any Consequence whatsoever, to assert that That which *is not*, can *be*, while it *is Not*; or that That which *is*, can *Not be*, while it *is*. 'Tis true, We, who have been used to converse only with Generations and Corruptions, and never saw any Thing *Made* or *Created*, but only *Formed* or *Framed*, are apt to endeavour to conform our Idea of *Creation* to that of *Formation*; and to imagine, that as in all *Formations* there is some Pre-Existing *Matter* out of which a Thing is *Formed*; so in *Creation* there must be considered a Pre-Existing *Nothing* out of which, as out of a real *Material* Cause, a Thing is *Created*: Which looks indeed very like a Contradiction. But this is only a Confusion of Ideas, just like Children's imagining that *Darkness* is some *real Thing*, which in the Morning is driven away by the Light, or Transformed into it: Whereas the true Notion of Creation is not a *Forming* Something *out of* Nothing, as out of a *Material Cause*; but only a bringing Something into Being, that before had no Being at all; or a *Causing* Something to Exist Now, that did not Exist Before; or which, without this Cause, would not have Existed. Which no Man can ever reduce to

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Contradiction, any more than the *Formation* of any Thing into a Shape which it had not before, can be reduced to a Contradiction.

But further: The *Creation of Matter* is a Thing not only *not impossible* in itself, but what moreover even by bare Reason is *demonstrated to be True*. For 'tis a Contradiction (as I have shewn above) to suppose Matter *Necessarily-Existing*.

page 24.

Of the
Power of
Creating
Immaterial
Cogitative
Substances.

2dly. 'Tis possible to Infinite Power to Create an *Immaterial Cogitative Substance* indued with a *Power of beginning Motion*, and with a *Liberty of Will or Choice*. This also has been always denied by all Atheists. And, because it is a Proposition of the greatest Consequence to Religion and Morality, therefore I shall be particular in endeavouring the Proof of the several Parts of it.

First, 'Tis possible to Infinite Power to Create an *Immaterial Cogitative Substance*. That there can be such a Thing as a *Cogitative Substance*, that is, a Substance indued with Consciousness and Thought, is granted by all; because every Man's own Experience convinces him that He himself is such a Substance. Further; That if there be, or *can be*, any such Thing as *Immaterial Substances*; then 'tis most reasonable to believe, that such Substances as are indued with Consciousness and Thought [Properties the farthest distant from the known Properties of Matter, and the most unlike them that can possibly be imagined] are those *Immaterial Substances*; this also will, I think, be granted by all Men. The only Point therefore, that remains to be proved, is, That *Immaterial Substances* are not impossible; or, that a Substance *Immaterial* is not a contradictory Notion. Now, whoever asserts that it is contradictory, must affirm, that whatever is not Matter, is nothing; and that, to say any Thing Exists which is not Matter, is saying that there Exists something which is nothing. Which in other Words is plainly
this;

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this ; That whatever we have not an Idea of, is nothing, and impossible to Be. For there is no other Way to reduce *Immaterial Substance* to a Contradiction, but by supposing *Immaterial* to signify the same as *Having no Existence* : And there is no possible Way to prove That, but by saying we have no Idea of it ; and therefore it neither has nor can have any Existence. By which same Argument, *Material Substance* will in like Manner be a Contradiction : For of *That* also (*viz.* of the *Substance* to which *Solidity* belongs) we have *No Idea*. But supposing it were *true* (as 'tis indeed most *false*) that we had a clearer Idea of the *Substance* of *Matter*, than we have of *Immaterial Substance* ; still by the same Argument, wherewith an Atheist will prove *Immaterial Substance* to be impossible, a Man born Blind may demonstrate irrefragably, that *Light* or *Colour* is an Impossible and Contradictory Notion, because it is not a *Sound* or a *Smell*. For the Power of *seeing Light* or *Colour* is, to a Man born Blind, altogether as incomprehensible and absolutely beyond the Reach of all his Ideas, as either the Operations and Perceptions, or even the Simple Essence of a Pure *Immaterial Substance* or *Spirit*, can be to any of Us. If therefore the Blind Man's Want of Ideas be not a sufficient Proof of the Impossibility of *Light* or *Colour* ; how comes our bare Want of Ideas to be a Demonstration of the Impossibility of the Being of *Immaterial Substances* ? A Blind Man, they will say, has *Testimony* of the Existence of *Light* : Very true ; So also have We of the Existence of *Immaterial Substances*. But there is this further Advantage on Our Side in the Comparison ; that a Blind Man, excepting the Testimony of *Others*, finds not, by Any Reasoning within himself, the least Likelihood or Probability, no not in the lowest possible Degree, that there can be any such Thing as *Light* or *Colour* : But We, besides Testimony, have great
and

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and strong Arguments both from Experience and Reason, that there are such Things as *Immaterial* Substances, though we have no Knowledge of their Simple Essence: As indeed of the *Substance* even of *Matter* itself (its Simple *Substance*, considered as abstract from, and as the Foundation of, That Essential *Property* of *Solidity*) we have no Idea: (For to say that *Extension* is the Substance of Matter is the same Way of thinking, as to say that *Existence*, or that *Duration*, is the Substance of Matter.) We have, I say, great and strong Arguments both from Experience and Reason, that there are such Things as *Immaterial* Substances, though we have no Idea of their Simple Essence. Even the very first and most universal Principle of *Gravitation* itself in *All Matter*, since it is ever Proportional, not at all to the *Surfaces* of Bodies, or of their Particles in any possible Supposition, but exactly to the *Solid Content* of Bodies, 'tis evident it cannot be caused by *Matter* acting upon the *Surfaces* of Matter, which is all *It* can do; but must (either *immediately* or *mediately*) be caused by something which continually penetrates its *Solid Substance*. But in *Animals*, which have a Power of Self-Motion; and in the perfecter Sorts of them, which have still higher Faculties; the Thing is yet more evident. For we see, and feel, and observe daily in ourselves and others, such Powers, and Operations, and Perceptions, as undeniably evince themselves either to be the Properties of *Immaterial* Substances: Or else it will follow, that *Matter* is something, of whose *Essential Powers* (as well as of its *Substance* itself) we have altogether as little Idea, as we have of *Immaterial* Beings: And then how are *Immaterial* Substances more impossible than *Material*? But, of this, more hereafter.

From

Being and Attributes of God.

From what has been said on this Head, it will be easy to answer all the Objections that have been brought by any Atheists against the Notion of *Human Souls* being *Immaterial* Substances distinct from Body. For since 'tis possible there may be such Things as Immaterial Substances; and since, if any such Substance *Can Be*, there is all the Reason in the World to believe that Conscious and Thinking Substance *Is* such; these Properties being the most remote from the known Properties of Matter that are possible to be conceived: The Foundation of *all* the Objections against the Immateriality of the Soul is intirely taken away. I shall not here tarry to consider the Objections *in particular* which have been often and fully answered by learned Pens, but shall only mention One on which all the rest depend, and to which they may all be reduced. And it is This:

* That, seeing the only Means we have of Perception are the Five Senses, and these all plainly depend upon the Organs of the Body, therefore the Soul, without the Body, can have no Perception, and consequently is Nothing. Now (besides that these very Senses or Perceptions, however they may be obstructed by bodily Indisposition, and so do indeed depend upon the Organs of the Body as to their present *Exercise*; yet, in their *Nature*, are really intirely distinct Powers, and cannot possibly, as has been

* before

* — Si immortalis natura animai est,

Et sentire potest secreta a corpore nostro;

Quinq; (ut opinor) eam faciundum est *Sensibus* auctam:

Nec ratione alia nosmet proponere nobis

Possumus infernas animas Acherunte vagare.

Pictores itaq; & scriptorum secla priora

Sic animas introduxerunt sensibus auctas,

At neq; seorsum oculi, &c. —

Nec sensus ipsi seorsum consistere possunt

Naribus atq; manu, atq; oculis, atq; auribus, atq;

Lingua; nec per se possunt sentire, nec esse. *Lucret. lib. 3.*

"Ὅσων γὰρ εἰσι ἀρχῶν ἡ ἐνέργεια σωματικὴ, δῆλον ὅτι ταύτας ἀνευ σώματος ἐξυπάρχουσιν οἷον βαδίζειν ἀνευ ποδῶν. *Aristot.*

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before shewn, be absolutely founded in, or arise from, any of the known Properties or Qualities of Matter: Besides this, I say) of Him that thus argues, I would only ask this one Question: Are our *Five* Senses, by an Absolute *Necessity* in the Nature of the Thing, *All* and the *only Possible* Ways of Perception? And is it impossible and contradictory, that there should be any Being in the Universe indued with Ways of Perception *different* from these that are the Result of *Our* present Composition? Or, are these Things, on the contrary, purely *Arbitrary*; and the same Power that gave *Us* these, may have given others to *Other Beings*, and might (if he had pleased) have given *to Us* others in this *present* State, and may yet have made us capable of different ones in *Another* State? If they be purely *Arbitrary*; then the Want of these does by no Means infer a total Want of Perception: But the same Soul, which in the present State has the Powers of *Reflexion*, *Reason*, and *Judgment*, which are Faculties intirely different from Sense; may as easily in another State have different Ways even of *Perception* also. But if any one will say, that these Senses of ours are *Necessarily* the *only* Ways of Perception; how does that appear? And is it not

infinitely more reasonable to suppose, that this is a † mere Prejudice, arising from Custom, and an attending to bare Sense in Opposition to Reason? For, supposing Men had been created only with *Four* Senses, and had never known the Use of *Sight*; would they not then have had the very same Reason to conclude there were but *Four* possible Ways of Perception, as they have Now to fancy that there are but *Five*?

And

† Has tamen imagines [*mortuorum*] loqui volebant; quod fieri nec sine lingua, nec sine palato, nec sine faucibus, laterum, pulmonum vi & figura potest. Nihil enim *Animo*, (*speaking of such as attributed to Spirits the same Powers and Senses only as they saw Men indued with in this present State*) videre poterant: Ad Oculos omnia referebant. Magni autem ingenii est revocare mentem a sensibus, & cogitationem a consuetudine abducere. *Cicero Tuscul. Quæst. 1.*

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And would they not then have thought *Sight* to have been an Impossible, Chimerical, and merely Imaginary Power, with absolutely *the same Reason*, as they now presume the Faculties of Immaterial Beings to be so? that is, with *no Reason at all*. One would think Men should be ashamed therefore to be so Vain, as merely from their own Negative *Ignorance*, without any Appearance or Pretence of any *Positive* Argument, to dispute against the *Possibility* of the Being of Things, which (excepting only that they cannot frame to themselves an *Image* or *Notion* of them) there is a Concurrence of all the Reasons in the World to persuade them that such Things Really are. And then, as to the Difficulty of Conceiving the Nature and Manner of the *Union* between Soul and Body, We know altogether as much of That, as we do of the Nature of the Union or Cohesion of the infinitely divisible Parts of Body: Which yet no Man doubts of. And therefore our Ignorance can be no more an Argument against the Truth of the One, than it is a Bar to our Belief of the Other.

Secondly, 'Tis possible to Infinite Power to indue a Creature with *the Power of beginning Motion*. This is constantly denied by all Atheists; because the Consequence of it is a *Liberty of Will*, of which I shall have Occasion to speak presently. But that the Proposition is true I thus prove: If the Power of beginning Motion be in itself a *Possible Thing*, and also *Possible to be communicated*; Then a Creature may be indued with That Power. Now that the Power of beginning Motion is in itself a *Possible Thing* I have already proved, by shewing that there must *Necessarily* be *somewhere* a Power of beginning Motion; because otherwise Motion must have been from Eternity, without any *External* Cause of its Being; and yet it is a Thing that has no Necessity of Existence in its *own Nature*. So that, if there
be

A Demonstration of the

page 11,
Etc.

be not *somewhere* a Principle or Power of beginning Motion, *Motion* must Exist without any Cause or Reason at all of its Existence, either *within* itself, or *from without* : Which, as I have before shewn, is an exprefs Contradiction. Wherefore a Principle or Power of beginning Motion there must of Necessity *Be* somewhere or other : And consequently it is not *in itself* an Impossible Thing. I add : As a Power of beginning Motion is not *in itself* an impossible Thing, because it must of Necessity *Be* in the Supreme Cause : So neither is it impossible to be *Communicated* to Created Beings. The Reason is plain : Because no Powers are Impossible to be Communicated, but only those which imply Self-Existence and absolute Independency. That a Subordinate Being should be Self-Existent or absolutely Independent is indeed a Contradiction ; but 'tis no Contradiction to suppose it indued with any Other Power whatsoever separate from these. I know the Maintainers of Fate are very confident, that a Power of beginning Motion is nothing less than being really Independent, or being able to Act Independently from any Superior Cause. But this is only a childish Trifling with Words. For a Power of Acting Independently *in This Sense*, communicated at the Pleasure of the Supreme Cause, and continued only during the same good Pleasure, is no more a real and absolute Independency, than the Power of *Existing*, (which I suppose the Defenders of *Fate* are not so fond to make a continual Creation, as they are to make the Power of Self-Motion a continual External Impulse ;) or than the Power of *being Conscious*, or *any other Power* whatsoever, can be said to imply Independency. In Reality, 'tis altogether as hard to conceive how *Consciousness*, or the Power of *Perception*, should be communicated to a Created Being, as how the Power of *Self-Motion* should be so. Unless *Perception* be Nothing else but a mere Passive Reception
of

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of Impulse; which I suppose is as clear that it is not, as that a Triangle is not a Sound, or that a Globe is not a Colour. Yet no Man doubts, but that He himself, and all Others, have truly a Power of *Perception*. And therefore, in like Manner, (however hard it may be to Conceive, as to the *Manner* of it; yet since, as has been now proved, it can never be shewn to be impossible and expressly contradictory, that a Power of *Self-Motion* should be communicated) I suppose no considering Man can doubt, but that he actually has also a Power of *Self-Motion*. For the Arguments drawn from continual Experience and Observation, to prove that we *have* such a Power, are so strong, that nothing less than a strict Demonstration that the Thing is absolutely impossible, and that it implies an express Contradiction, can make us in the least doubt that we have it not. We have all the same Experience, the same Marks and Evidence exactly, of our having really a Power of Self-Motion, as the most rigid Fatalist could possibly contrive to require, if he was to make a *Supposition* of a Man's being indued with that Power. There is no one Thing that such a Man can imagine *ought* to follow from the Supposition of *Self-Motion*, which every Man does not now as much feel and *actually* experience in Himself, as it can possibly be imagined any Man *would* do, supposing the Thing were true. Wherefore to affirm, notwithstanding all this, that the Spirits, by which a Man moves the Members of his Body, and ranges the Thoughts of his Mind, are Themselves moved wholly by Air or Subtler Matter inspired into the Body; and That again by other External Matter, and so on; as the Wheels of a Clock are moved by the Weights, and those Weights by Gravitation, and so on; without a Man's having the least Power, by any Principle within himself, to think any one Thought, or impel his own Spirits, in order to
move

A Demonstration of the

move any Member of his Body : All this is so contrary to Experience and the Reason of Things, that, unless the Idea of *Self-Motion* were in itself as evidently and *clearly* a Contradiction, as that Two and Two should make Five, a Man ought to be ashamed to talk at that Rate. Nay, a Man of any considerable Degree of Modesty, would even in That Case be almost tempted rather to doubt the Truth of his Faculties ; than take upon him to assert one such intolerable Absurdity, merely for the Avoiding of another. There are Some indeed, who, denying Men the Power of *beginning Motion*, would yet seem in some Manner to account for their Actions, by allowing them a Power of *determining Motion*. But this also is a mere ludicrous Trifling with Words. For, if That Power of *determining Motion*, be no other in a Man, than that which is in a Stone to reflect a Ball *one certain Way* ; this is just nothing at all. But if he has a Power of determining the Motion of his Spirits *any Way*, as he himself pleases ; this is, in all Respects, the very same as the Power of *beginning Motion*.

Of the
Possibility
of inducing
a Creature
with Free-
dom or Li-
berty of
Will.

page 58.

Thirdly, 'Tis possible to Infinite Power to indue a Creature with *Freedom* or *Liberty of Will*. It might suffice that this is at once proved by the same Arguments, and in the same Method, as I just now proved *Self-Motion*, or a *Power of beginning Motion*, to be possible : *viz.* *Because* Liberty must of Necessity *Be* in the Supreme Cause ; (as is at large proved in the *Ninth* General Head of this Discourse) and therefore cannot be impossible and contradictory in the Nature of the Thing itself : And *because* it implies no Contradiction to suppose it *communicated*, as being no harder to conceive, than the forementioned Power of *beginning Motion* : And *because* the Arguments, drawn from Experience and Observation, are stronger on the one Side of the Question, than those, arising merely from the Difficulty of
our

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our apprehending the Thing, can be on the other. But, forasmuch as This is the Question of the greatest Concern of all, in Matters both of Religion and Human Life; and both *Spinoza*, and Mr. *Hobbs*, and their Followers, have with great Noise and Confidence denied it: I shall therefore (not contenting myself with this) endeavour to shew, moreover, in particular, the Weakness of the Principal Arguments by which these Men have pretended to demonstrate, that there cannot *possibly* be any such Power in Man as a *Liberty of Will*. As to the Propriety of the Terms, whether the Will be properly the Seat of Liberty or not, is not now to the Purpose to inquire: The Question being not *Where* the Seat of Liberty is? but *Whether* there *be at all* in Man any such Power as a Liberty of Choice, and of Determining his own Actions? or, on the contrary, his Actions be all as Necessary as the Motions of a Clock. The Arguments by which *Spinoza* and Mr. *Hobbs* have attempted to maintain this latter Side of the Question are all plainly reducible to these Two:

1st. That, since every Effect must needs be produced by some Cause; therefore, as every Motion in a Body must have been caused by the Impulse of some other Body, and the Motion of That by the Impulse of a Third; so every Volition or Determination of the Will of Man must needs be produced by some External Cause. and That in like Manner be the Effect of some Third. And consequently that there cannot possibly be any such Thing in Nature as Liberty or Freedom of Will.

2^{dly}. That Thinking and all its Modes, as Willing and the like, are Qualities or Affections of Matter. And consequently, since 'tis manifest that Matter has not in itself a Power of beginning Motion, or giving itself any Manner of Determination whatsoever;

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therefore 'tis evident likewise, that 'tis impossible there should be any such Thing as Freedom of Will.

*An Answer
to Mr.
Hobbs and
Spinoza's
Arguments
against the
Possibility
of Liberty.*

Now to these Arguments I oppose, and shall endeavour briefly to demonstrate, the Three following Propositions.

1st. That Every Effect cannot possibly be the Product of External Causes; but there must of Necessity be Somewhere a Beginning of Operation, or a Power of Acting without being antecedently acted upon. And that this Power may be, and is, in *Man*.

2^{dly}. That Thinking and Willing neither are, nor can be, Qualities and Affections of Matter; and consequently are not concluded under the Laws thereof.

3^{dly}. That even supposing the Soul not to be a distinct Substance from Body, but that Thinking and Willing could be, and were indeed, only Qualities or Affections of Matter; yet even *This* would not at all affect the present Question, nor prove Freedom of Will to be impossible.

*That there
must be
somewhere
a Begin-
ning of
Operation.*

1st. Every Effect cannot possibly be the Product of External Causes; but there must of Necessity be Somewhere a Beginning of Operation, or a Power of Acting without being antecedently acted upon: And this Power may be, and is, in *Man*. The several Parts of this Proposition have been already proved in the *Second* and *Ninth* General Heads of this Discourse; and in that Part of this *Tenth* Head which is concerning the Possibility of the Power of Self-Motion being communicated to Created Beings. I shall not therefore here repeat the Proofs, but only apply them to *Spinoza's* and *Mr. Hobbs's* Arguments, so far as is necessary to shew the Weakness of what they have said upon this Head in Opposition to the Possibility of Liberty or Freedom of Will. Now the
Manner

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Manner of their Arguing upon this Head, is this
That every Effect must needs be owing to some Cause;
and That Cause must produce the Effect * necessarily; because, if it be
a sufficient Cause, the Effect cannot
but follow; and, if it be not a sufficient Cause, it will not be at all a
Cause of that Thing. Thus, for Instance, † whatever Body is moved,
must be moved by some other Body,
which itself likewise must be moved
by some Third, and so on without
End. That the ‡ Will, in like Manner, of any voluntary Agent, must of
Necessity be || determined by some External Cause, and not by any Power
of determining itself, inherent in itself: And That External Cause must
be determined necessarily by some other
Cause External to It; and so on without
End. From all which it evidently appears, that All that these
Men urge against the Possibility
of Freedom, extends equally to
all other Beings (not excepting the
Supreme) as well as to Men: And
* Spinoza in exprefs Words confesses it. Wherefore consequently,
whatever Noise they make of the
Strength and Demonstrative Force
of their Arguments; all that they
say amounts at last to no more but
this One most absurd Conclusion;

G 2

that

In mente nulla est absoluta sive libera voluntas; sed mens ad hoc vel illud volendum determinatur a causa, quæ etiam ab alia determinata est, & hæc iterum ab alia, & sic in infinitum. Spinoza, Ethic. Par. II. Prop. 48.

|| See above, page 68.

* Hinc sequitur, Deum non operari ex libertate voluntatis. Ethic. Par. I. Carol. ad Prop. 32.

* Quicumq; unquam Effectus productus sit, productus est a causa necessaria. Nam quod productum est, causam habuit integram, hoc est, omnia ea quibus suppositis Effectum non sequi intelligi non possit: ea vero causa necessaria est. Hobbs Philosophia prima, cap. 9.

† Corpus motum, vel quiescens, ad motum vel quietem determinari debuit ab alio corpore, quod etiam ad motum vel quietem determinatum fuit ab alio, & illud iterum ab alio, & sic in infinitum. Spinoza, Ethic. Par. II. Prop. 13. Lemma 3.

‡ Unaquæq; volitio non potest existere, neq; ad operandum determinari, nisi ab alia causa determinetur, & hæc rursus ab alia; & sic porro in infinitum. Id. Ethic. Par. I. Prop. 32. Demonstrat.

I conceive nothing taketh Beginning from itself, but from the Action of some immediate Agent without itself. And that therefore, when first a Man had an Appetite or Will to something; to which, immediately before, he had no Appetite or Will, the Cause of his Will is not the Will itself, but something else not in his own disposing. Hobbs's Debate with Bp. Bramhall, page 289.

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that there neither is any-where, nor can possibly be, any Principle of Motion or Beginning of Operation at all; but every Thing is caused necessarily by an eternal Chain of Dependent Causes and Effects, without any Independent Original. All their Arguments therefore on this Head are already answered in the *Second* and *Ninth* General Heads of this Discourse; (where I proved that there must of Necessity be an *Original, Independent, and Free* Principle of Motion or Action; and that, to suppose an endless Succession of Dependent Causes and Effects, without any Original or First and Self-actuating Principle, is supposing a *Series of Dependent Things* to be from *Eternity* produced by *Nothing*; which is the very same Absurdity and Contradiction, as to suppose Things produced by Nothing at any definite Time; the Ability of Nothing to produce any Thing, being plainly the same in *Time* or in *Eternity*.) And I have moreover proved *ex abundanti*, in the foregoing Part of this *Tenth* Head; that the Power of beginning Motion is not only possible and certain in itself, but also possible to be communicated to Finite Beings; and that it actually Is in Man.

That
Thinking
and Wil-
ling neither
are, nor
can be,
Affections
of Matter.
*page 73.

page 50.
page 52.

2dly. Thinking and Willing neither are, nor can be, Qualities or Affections of *Matter*; and consequently are not concluded under the Laws thereof. That 'tis possible there * may be Immaterial Substances, the Notion not implying a Contradiction in itself; hath already been shewn under the present General Proposition. Further, that Thinking and Willing are Powers intirely different from Solidity, Figure and Motion; and, if they be different, that then they cannot possibly arise from them, or be compounded of them; hath likewise been already proved under the *Eighth* General Head of this Discourse. It follows therefore, that Thinking and Willing may possibly be, nay, that they certainly and necessarily are, Faculties or Powers of Immaterial Substances;

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Substances ; seeing they *cannot possibly* be Qualities or Affections of *Matter* ; unless we will confound (as some have done) the Ideas of Things ; and mean by *Matter*, not what That Word in all other Cases signifies, a *solid Substance* capable of Division, Figure, and Motion, and of whatever Properties can arise from the Modifications of these ; but *Substance in general*, capable of unknown Powers or Properties intirely different from these, and from whatever can possibly result from these. In which confused Sense of the Word, could *Matter* be supposed never so capable of Thinking and Willing ; yet in That Sense, (as I shall shew presently) it would signify nothing at all to the Purpose or Advantage of our Adversaries. In the mean Time, how great an Absurdity it is to suppose Thinking and Willing to be Qualities or Affections of *Matter*, in the Proper and Usual Sense of the Word ; may sufficiently appear, without any foreign Argument, from the Senselessness of Mr. *Hobbs's* Own Explication of the Nature and Original of Sensation and Consciousness. *The immediate Cause*

*of Sensation, * saith he, is this : The Object, or Something flowing from it, presseth the outermost Part of the Organ, and That Pressure is communicated to the innermost Parts of the Organ ; Where, by the Resistance or Reaction of the Organ, causing a Pressure outwards contrary to the Pressure of the Object inwards, there is made up a Phantasm or Image :*

G 3

Which

* Ex quo intelligitur, Sensationis immediatam causam esse in eo, quod Sensationis Organum primum & tangit & premit. Si enim organi pars externa prematur ; illa cedente, premetur quoque pars quæ versus interiora illi proxima est ; & ita propagabitur pressio, sive Motus ille, per partes Organi omnes, usque ad intimam. — Quoniam autem motui ab Objecto per media ad Organi partem intimam propagato, fit aliqua totius Organi resis-

tentia sive reactio, per motum ipsius Organi internum naturalem ; fit propterea conatus ab Objecto, conatus ab Organo contrarius. Ut, cum conatus ille ad intima, ultimus actus sit eorum qui sunt in actu Sensationis ; tum demum ex ea reactione aliquandiu durante, ipsum existat *Phantasma* ; quod propter conatum versus externa, semper videtur tanquam aliquid situm extra Organum. *Hobbs de Sensatione & Motu Animalis.*

A Demonstration of the

*Alma est sentiendi
Hobbs de Sensatione &
Motu Animalis.*

† *Causa Sensationis est Externum Corpus five Objectum quod premit Organum proprium; & premendo, (mediantibus Nervis & Membranis) continuum efficit Motum introrsum ad Cerebrum & inde ad Cor; unde nascitur Cordis resistentia & contra-pressio seu ἀντίστασις, five Conatus Cordis liberantis se a pressione per motum tendentem extrorsum; qui motus propterea apparet tanquam aliquid externum: Atque Apparitio hæc, five Phantasma, est id quod vocamus Sensationem. Leviathan, cap. 1.*

*Which Phantasm, * saith he, is the Sensation itself. Again; The Cause of Sensation, † saith he, is an Object pressing the Organ; which Pressure is by Means of the Nerves conveyed to the Brain, and so to the Heart; Where, by the Resistance or Counter-pressure of the Heart outwards, is made an Image or Phantasm, which is Sensation. Now what is there in all this that does in any the least Measure tend to explain or make intelligible the real and inward Nature of Sense or Consciousness? The Object, by communicating a Pressure through the Organ to the Sensory, does*

indeed raise a Phantasm or Image, that is, make a certain Impression on the Brain: But Wherein consists the Power of Perceiving this Impression, and of being Sensible of it? Or What Similitude hath this Impression to the Sense itself, that is, to the Thought excited in the Mind? Why, exactly the very same that a Square has to Blueness, or a Triangle to Sound, or a Needle to the Sense of Pain, or the Reflecting of a Tennis-Ball to the Reason and Understanding of a Man. So that Mr. Hobbs's Definition of Sensation, that it is itself, the inmost and formal Nature of it, nothing but the Phantasm or Image made in the Brain by the Pressure communicated from the Object, is, in other Words, defining Blueness to be the Image of a Square, or Sound the Picture of a Triangle, or Pain the Similitude of a Sharp-pointed Needle. I do not here misrepresent him in the least.

For He himself expressly confesses, ‡ that all Sensible Qualities, such as Colour,

‡ *Quæ qualitates omnes nominari solent sensibiles, & sunt in ipso Objecto nihil aliud præter materiæ motum, quo Objectum in Organa Sensuum diversimode operatur. Neq; in Nobis aliud sunt, quam diversi motus. Motus enim nihil generat præter motum. Leviathan, cap. 1.*

generat præter motum. Leviathan, cap. 1.

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Colour, Sound, and the like, are in the Objects themselves nothing but Motion; And, because Motion can produce * nothing but Motion, (as likewise 'tis evident * See Four Defences of a Letter to Mr. Dodwell. that Figure and all its possible Compositions can produce nothing but Figure) therefore in Us also the Perceptions of these sensible Qualities are nothing but different Motions. If then the Phantasm, that is, the Image of the Object made in the Brain by Figure and Motion, be (as he says) the Sensation itself, Is not Sensation bare Figure and Motion? And are not all the forementioned Absurdities unavoidable Consequences of his Opinion?

Mr. Hobbs (as I have elsewhere observed) seems indeed not to have been altogether unaware of this insuperable Difficulty; but he industriously endeavours to conceal it from his Readers, and to impose upon them by the Ambiguity of the Word *Phantasm*.

Yet, for a Reserve, in Case he should be too hard pressed, † he gives us a Hint, that possibly Sensation may be something more, viz. a Power of Perception or Consciousness naturally and essentially inherent in all Matter, only that it wants the Organs and Memory of Animals to express its Sensation: And ‡ that, as a Man, if he were supposed to have no other Sense but Seeing, and That so ordered as that his Eyes were always immoveably fixed upon one and the same Object, and That also unchangeable and without any the least Variety; such a Man could not properly be said to See, but only to be under an unintelligible Kind of Amazement: So all unorganized Bodies may possibly have Sensation or Perception; but because for Want of Organs there is no

† Scio fuisse Philosophos quosdam, eosdemq; viros doctos, qui corpora omnia Sensu prædita esse sustinuerunt: Nec video, si natura sensationis in reactione sola collocaretur, quomodo refutari possint. Sed et si ex reactione etiam corporum aliorum, phantasma aliquod nasceretur; illud tamen, remoto objecto, statim cessaret. Nam nisi ad retinendum Motum impressum, etiam remoto Objecto, apta habeant Organa, ut habent Animalia; ita tantum sentient, ut nunquam sensisse se recordentur.

Sensationi ergo, quæ vulgo ita appellatur, necessario adhæret memoria aliqua, &c. Hobbs *Physic. Cap. 25. Sect. 5.* See also No. 2 & 11 of the Appendix to a Collection of Papers which passed between Mr. Leibnitz and Dr. Clarke.

‡ Itaq; & Sensationi adhæret proprie dictæ, ut ei aliqua in-

A Demonstration of the

petua phantasma-
etas; ita ut aliud ab
alio discerni possit. Si suppo-
nemus enim esse hominem,
oculis quidem claris, cæterisq;
videndi Organis recte se ha-
bentibus compositum, nullo
autem alio sensu præditum,
eumq; ad eandem rem eodem
semper colore & specie sine
ulla vel minima varietate ap-
parentem obversum esse; mihi
certe, quicquid dicant alii, non
Videre videretur.—— Attoni-
tum esse, & fortasse *Aspectare*
eum, sed stupentem dicerem,
videre non dicerem. Adeo
Sentire semper idem, & Non
Sentire, ad idem recidunt.
Id. ibid.

Variety in it, neither any Memory
or Means of expressing that Sensation,
therefore to Us it seems as if they had
no such Thing at all. This Opinion,
I say, Mr. *Hobbs* mentions as pos-
sible: But he does it with such
Hesitancy, Diffidence, and Spa-
ringness, as shews plainly that he
meant it only as a last Subterfuge
to recur to, when he should be
pressed with the fore-mentioned
Absurdities unavoidably conse-
quent upon the Supposition of
Sensation being only Figure and
Motion. And indeed well might
he be sparing, and, as it were,
ashamed of this Subterfuge. For it is a Thing
altogether as absurd, as even the other Opinion
itself of Thought being mere Motion. For,
What can be more ridiculous, than to imagine that
Matter is as essentially Conscious as it is extended?
Will it not follow from that Supposition, that
every Piece of Matter, being made up of endlessly
separable Parts, (that is, of Parts which are as really
distinct Beings, notwithstanding their Contiguity,
as if they had been at never so great a Distance
one from another) is made up also of innumerable
Consciousnesses and Infinite Confusion? But 'tis a
Shame to trouble the *Reader* with so much as the
Mention of any of the Numberless Absurdities fol-
lowing from that Monstrous Supposition. Others
therefore, who would make Thinking to be an
Affection of *Matter*, and yet are ashamed to use
Either of the forementioned Ways; contend that
God, by his Almighty and Supreme Power, indues
certain Systems of Matter with a Faculty of Think-
ing, according to his own good Pleasure. But
this also amounts to Nothing. For (besides the
Absurdity

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Absurdity of supposing God to make an *innumerable* Company of distinct Beings, such as the Particles of every System of Matter necessarily are, to be at the same Time *One Individual* Conscious Being: Besides this, I say) either our Idea of *Matter* is a true and distinct Idea, or it is not. If it be a true and distinct Idea; that is, if our Idea (not of the *Substance* of Matter; for of simple *Substance* we have no Idea; but if our Idea of the *Properties* which *essentially distinguish and denominate* the Substance) be a right Idea, *viz.* that *Matter* is Nothing but a Solid Substance, capable only of Division, Figure, and Motion, with all the possible Effects of their several Compositions; as to *Us* it appears to be, upon the Best Examination we are able to make of it; and the greatest Part of our Adversaries themselves readily allow: Then 'tis absolutely Impossible for Thinking to belong to *Matter*; because Thinking, as has been before shewn, cannot possibly arise *pages 52,* from *any Modification or Composition of any or all of* *86, & 87.* these Qualities. But if any Man will say, that our *Idea of Matter* is wrong; and that by *Matter* he will not here mean, as in all other Cases, a Solid Substance, capable only of Division, Figure, and Motion, with all the possible Effects of their several Compositions; but that he means *Substance in general*, capable of Thinking and of numberless unknown Properties besides: Then he trifles only, in putting an ambiguous Signification upon the Word *Matter*, where he ought to use the Word *Substance*. And, in *That Sense*, to suppose Thinking or any other Active Property possible to be in *Matter*, as signifying only *Substance in general*, of whose Powers and Capacities we have no certain Idea; would make nothing at all to the *Present Purpose*, in our Adversaries Advantage; and is at least *Not a clearer and more Intelligible Way of Talking,*

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Talking, than to attribute the same Properties to an *Immaterial* Substance, and keep the Idea of *Matter* and *its Properties* clear and distinct. For I affirm,

That, if Thinking and Willing were Qualities of Matter, yet nevertheless Liberty might be possible.
*pages 50, 52, 86, & 87.

3dly, That even supposing (in these Mens confused Way) that the Soul was really not a distinct Substance from Body, but that Thinking and Willing could be and were indeed only Qualities or Affections of *Matter*; yet even *This* would not at all affect the present Question about *Liberty*, nor prove Freedom of Will to be an impossible Thing. For, since it has been * already demonstrated, that Thinking and Willing cannot possibly be Effects or Compositions of Figure and Motion; Whosoever will make Thinking and Willing to be Qualities or Affections of *Matter*, must suppose *Matter* capable of certain Properties intirely different from Figure and Motion. And, if it be capable of Properties intirely different from Figure and Motion, then it can never be proved from the Effects of Figure and Motion being all Necessary, that the Effects of other and totally distinct Properties must likewise be Necessary.

A shameful Fallacy of Mr. Hobbs and his Followers.

Mr. *Hobbs*, therefore, and his Followers, are guilty of a most shameful Fallacy in that very Argument, wherein they place their main and chief Strength. For, supposing *Matter* to be capable of Thinking and Willing, they contend that the Soul is mere *Matter*; and, knowing that the Effects of Figure and Motion must needs be all Necessary, they conclude that the Operations of the Mind must All therefore be Necessary: That is, When they would prove the Soul *to be* mere *Matter*; then they suppose *Matter* capable not only of Figure and Motion, but also of other unknown Properties: And when they would prove the Will, and all other Operations of the Soul, to be *Necessary*; then they divest *Matter* again of all its unknown Properties, and

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and make it mere Solidity, indued only with Figure and Motion again. Wherefore, distinguishing their ambiguous and confused Use of the Word *Matter*; they are unavoidably reduced to one of these Two Concessions: If by *Matter* they mean a Solid Substance indued only with Figure and Motion, and all the possible Effects of the Variations and Compositions of these Qualities; then the Soul cannot be mere Matter; because (as Mr. *Hobbs* himself * confesses) Figure and Motion can never produce any Thing but Figure and Motion; and consequently (as hath been † before demonstrated) they can never produce so much as any Secondary Quality, [*Sound, Colour, and the like*] much less Thinking and Reasoning: From whence it follows, that, the Soul being unavoidably a Substance *Immaterial*, they have no Argument left to prove that it cannot have a *Power of Beginning Motion*; which is a plain Instance of *Liberty*. But if, on the other Hand, they will by *Matter* mean *Substance in general*, capable of unknown Properties, totally different from Figure and Motion; then they must no longer argue against the Possibility of *Liberty*, from the Effects of Figure and Motion being all unavoidably Necessary; because Liberty will not consist in the Effects of Figure and Motion, but in those Other Unknown Properties of Matter, which these Men can no more explain or argue about, than about *Immaterial Substances*. The Truth therefore is; They must needs suppose Thinking to be merely an Effect or Composition of Figure and Motion, if they will give any Strength to their Arguments against *Liberty*: And then the Question will be, not Whether God can make *Matter* think or no? (for in That Question they only trifle with a Word, abusing the Word *Matter* to signify *Substance in general*) but the Question will be, Whether *Figure and Motion*, in any Composition or Division, can possibly Be *Perception and Thought*?

Which

* *Motus nihil generat præter Motum.*
Leviath.
cap. I.

† pages 52, 86, & 87.

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Which (as has been before said) is just such a Question, as if a Man should ask, Whether it be possible that a *Triangle* should be a *Sound*, or a *Globe* a *Colour*? The Sum is this: If the Soul be an *Immaterial Substance*, (as it must needs be, if we have any true Idea of the Nature and Properties of *Matter*) then Mr. *Hobbs's* Arguments against the Possibility of *Liberty*, drawn all from the Properties of *Matter*, are vain and nothing to the Purpose. But if our Adversaries will be so absurd as to contend, that the Soul is nothing but mere *Matter*; Then either by *Matter* they must understand *Substance* in general, Substance indued with unknown Powers, with *Active* as well as *Passive* Properties; which is confounding and taking away our Idea of *Matter*, and at the same Time destroying all their own Arguments against *Liberty*, which they have founded wholly on the *known* Properties of *Matter*: Or else they must speak out, (as they really mean) that Thinking and Willing are nothing but Effects and Compositions of Figure and Motion; which I have already shewn to be a Contradiction in Terms.

pages 50,
52, 86,
& 87.

There are some other Arguments against the Possibility of *Liberty*, which Men, by attempting to answer, have made to appear considerable; when in Reality they are altogether beside the Question. As, for Instance, those drawn from *the Necessity of the Will's being determined by the last Judgment of the Understanding*; And from the *Certainty of the Divine Prescience*.

Of the
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being Ne-
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As to the former, viz. *The Necessity of the Will's being determined by the last Judgment of the Understanding*: This is only a Necessity upon Supposition; that is to say, a Necessity that a Man should *Will* a Thing when 'tis supposed that he *does Will* it: Just as if one should affirm, that every Thing which Is, is therefore Necessary to Be, because, when it Is, it cannot but Be. For the last Judgment

of

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of the Understanding is nothing else but a Man's final Determining (after more or less Consideration) either to Chuse or not to Chuse a Thing; that is, 'tis the very same with the *Act of Volition*. Or else, if the *Act of Volition* be distinguished from the *last Judgment of the Understanding*; then the *Act of Volition*, or rather the *Beginning of Action*, consequent upon the *last Judgment of the Understanding*, is not determined or caused by that last Judgment, as by the *Physical Efficient*, but only as the *Moral Motive*. For the true, proper, immediate, *Physical Efficient Cause* of Action, is the *Power of Self-Motion* in Men, which exerts itself *freely* in Consequence of the *last Judgment of the Understanding*. But the *last Judgment of the Understanding* is not itself a *Physical Efficient*, but merely a *Moral Motive*, upon which the *Physical Efficient* or *Motive Power* begins to Act. The *Necessity* therefore, by which the *Power of Acting* follows the *Judgment of the Understanding*, is only a *Moral Necessity*; that is, *no Necessity at all* in the Sense wherein the Opposers of Liberty understand *Necessity*. For *Moral Necessity* is evidently consistent with the most perfect *Natural Liberty*. For Instance, A Man, intirely free from all Pain of Body and Disorder of Mind, judges it unreasonable for him to Hurt or Destroy himself: And, being under no Temptation or External Violence, he *cannot possibly* act contrary to this Judgment; not because he wants a *Natural* or *Physical Power* so to do, but because 'tis absurd and mischievous, and *morally impossible*, for him to Chuse to do it. Which also is the very same Reason why the most perfect rational Creatures, superior to Men, *cannot* do Evil: Not because they want a *Natural Power* to perform the Material Action; but because 'tis *morally impossible*, that, with a perfect Knowledge of what is Best, and without any Temptation to Evil, their

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their Will should determine itself to Chuse to Act Foolishly and Unreasonably. Here therefore seems at last really to lie the Fundamental Error, both of those who argue against the *Liberty of the Will*, and of those who but too confusedly defend it: They do not make a clear Distinction between *Moral Motives* and *Causes Physically Efficient*; Which Two Things have no Similitude at all. Lastly, If the Maintainers of Fate shall alledge, that, after all, they think a Man, free from all Pain of Body and Disorder of Mind, is under not only a *Moral* but also a *Natural* Impossibility of hurting or destroying himself; because neither his *Judgment* nor his *Will*, without some *Impulse External* to both, can any more possibly be determined to any Action, than one Body can begin to move without being impelled by another: I answer, This is forsaking the Argument drawn from the Necessity of the *Will's* following the *Understanding*, and recurs to the former Argument of the Absolute Impossibility of there being any-where a *first Principle of Motion* at all: Which has been abundantly answered already.

page 77.

The Certainty of Divine Fore-Knowledge not inconsistent with the Liberty of Mens Actions.

The *Other* Argument, which I said has also frequently been urged against the Possibility of *Liberty*, is the *Certainty of the Divine Prescience*. But this also is intirely beside the Question. For if there be no *Other* Arguments, by which it can be proved antecedently, that all Actions are *Necessary*; 'tis certain it can never be made to appear to follow from *Prescience alone* that they must be so. That is, If upon *Other Accounts* there be no Impossibility but that the Actions of Men may be free; the bare *Certainty of the Divine Fore-Knowledge* can never be proved to destroy That Freedom, or make Any Alteration in the Nature of Mens Actions: And consequently the Certainty of

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of *Prescience*, separated from *Other Arguments*, is altogether beside the Question concerning *Liberty*. As to the *Other Arguments*, usually intermingled with this Question; they have all, I think, been answered already. And now, that the *bare Certainty of the Divine Fore-Knowledge* (if upon *Other Accounts* there be no Impossibility for the Actions of Men to be free) can never be proved to destroy that Freedom, is very Evident. For bare Fore-Knowledge has *no Influence at all* in any Respect, nor affects, in any Measure, the Manner of the Existence of any Thing. All that the greatest Opposers of Liberty have ever urged, or can urge, upon this Head, amounts only to This; that *Fore-Knowledge* implies *Certainty*, and *Certainty* implies *Necessity*. But neither is it true that *Certainty* implies *Necessity*; neither does *Fore-Knowledge* imply any other *Certainty*, than such a *Certainty* only as would be equally in Things, though there was no *Fore-Knowledge*.

For (1st.) The *Certainty of Fore-Knowledge* does not cause the *Certainty of Things*, but is itself founded on the Reality of their Existence. Whatever now Is, 'tis *certain* that it Is; and it was Yesterday and from Eternity as *certainly* true, that the Thing *would be* To-day, as 'tis now *certain* that it Is. And This *Certainty of Event* is equally the same whether it be supposed that the Thing could be Fore-known or not. For whatever at any Time Is, 'twas *certainly* true from Eternity, as to the Event, that That Thing *would be*: And this certain Truth of every future Event would not at all have been the less, though there had been no such Thing as Fore-Knowledge. Bare *Prescience* therefore, has *no Influence at all* upon any Thing; nor contributes in the least towards the making it Necessary. We may illustrate this in some Measure by the Comparifon of our own Knowledge.

We

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We know certainly that some Things Are ; and, when we know that they are, they cannot but Be : Yet 'tis manifest our Knowledge does not at all affect the Things to make them more Necessary or more Certain. Now Fore-Knowledge in *God* is the very same as Knowledge. All Things are to him as if they were equally present to all the Purposes of Knowledge and Power. He knows perfectly every Thing that Is : And he Fore-knows whatever shall be, in the same Manner as he knows what Is. As therefore *Knowledge* has no Influence on Things that *are* ; so neither has *Fore-Knowledge* on Things that *shall be*. 'Tis true ; The *Manner* how *God* can foresee Future Things, without a Chain of Necessary Causes ; is impossible for us to explain *distinctly*. Tho' some Sort of *general* Notion we may conceive of it. For as a *Man*, who has no Influence over another Person's Actions, can yet often perceive before-hand what That Other will do ; and a *Wiser* and more experienced Man will still with *greater Probability* foresee what Another, whose Disposition he is perfectly acquainted with, will in certain Circumstances do ; And an *Angel*, with still much *Less Degrees of Error*, may have a *further* Prospect into Mens future Actions : So 'tis very reasonable to apprehend, that *God*, without influencing Mens Wills by his Power, yet by his Foresight cannot but have as much *Certainer* a Knowledge of future free Events, than either Men or Angels can possibly have ; as the *Perfection* of *His* Nature is greater than that of *Theirs*. The *Distinct Manner* how he foresees these Things is indeed *impossible* for *Us* to explain. But so also are Numberless other Things which yet no Man doubts the Truth of. And, if there *were* any Strength in This Argument ; it would prove, not against *Liberty*, but against *Prescience* itself. For if these

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Two Things were *really inconsistent*, and one of them must be destroyed; the introducing an absolute and universal Fatality, which evidently destroys all Religion and Morality, would tend more of the Two to the Dishonour of God, than the denying him a Fore-Knowledge, which upon this Supposition would be impossible and imply a Contradiction to conceive him to have; and the denying of which, would in such Case be no more a Diminution of his *Omniscience*, than the denying him the Power of working Contradictions, is taking away his *Omnipotence*. But the Case is not thus. For though we cannot indeed clearly and distinctly explain the *Manner* of God's foreseeing the Actions of Free-Agents; yet thus much we know, that the bare Fore-Knowledge of any Action, that would upon all other Accounts be Free, cannot alter or diminish That Freedom; it being evident that Fore-Knowledge adds no other Certainty to any Thing, than what it would equally have though there was no Fore-Knowledge. Unless therefore we be antecedently certain that nothing can possibly be Free; and that Liberty is in itself absolutely an Inconsistent and Contradictory Notion; (as I have above shewn that it is not) bare page 67. Fore-Knowledge, which makes no Alteration at all in any Thing, will not be any Way Inconsistent with Liberty; how great Difficulty soever there may be in comprehending the *Manner* of such Fore-Knowledge. For if Liberty be in itself possible; The bare *Forefight* of a Free Action, *before it be done*, is nothing different (to any Purpose in the present Question) from a simple *Knowledge* of it *when it is done*: Both these Kinds of Knowledge implying plainly a *Certainty only* of the Event, (which would be the same though there was no such Knowledge) and not at all any *Necessity* of the Thing.

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For (2dly,) As *Fore-Knowledge* implies not any other Certainty than such as would be equally in Things though there was no *Fore-Knowledge*: So neither does this *Certainty of Event* in any Sort imply *Necessity*. For let a Fatalist suppose (what he does not yet grant) that there was in Man (as we assert) a Power of beginning Motion, that is, of *acting freely*; and let him suppose further, if he please, that those Actions could not possibly be Fore-known: Will there not yet, notwithstanding this Supposition, be in the Nature of Things the same *Certainty of Event* in every one of the Man's Actions as if they were never so Fatal and Necessary? For Instance; Suppose the Man, by an internal Principle of Motion, and an absolute Freedom of Will, without any External Cause or Impulse at all, does some particular Action *To-day*; and suppose it was not possible that this Action should have been fore-seen *Yesterday*; was there not nevertheless the same *Certainty of Event* as if it had been fore-seen? That is, Would it not, notwithstanding the *supposed* Freedom, have been as *certain a Truth Yesterday* and from Eternity that this Action was in Event *to be performed To-day*, (though supposed never so impossible to have been Fore-known) as 'tis now a *Certain and Infallible Truth* that it Is performed? Mere *Certainty of Event* therefore does not in any Measure imply *Necessity*. And consequently *Fore-Knowledge*, however difficult to be explained, as to the *Manner* of it, yet (since 'tis evident it implies no other Certainty but only That Certainty of Event which the Thing would equally have without being Fore-known) 'tis evident that *It* also implies no *Necessity*.

And

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And now, having, as I hope, sufficiently proved both the Possibility and the real Existence of *Original Liberty*; I shall, from what has been said on this *Head*, draw only this one Inference, that hereby we are enabled to answer that Ancient and Great Question, [*Πότεν τὸ κακόν;*] What is the Cause and Original of *Evil*? For Liberty implying a *Natural Power* of doing Evil as well as Good; and the imperfect Nature of Finite Beings making it possible for them to abuse This their Liberty to an actual Commission of Evil; and it being Necessary to the Order and Beauty of the Whole, and for displaying the Infinite Wisdom of the Creator, that there should be different and various Degrees of Creatures, whereof consequently some must be *less Perfect* than others; Hence there necessarily arises a Possibility of Evil, notwithstanding that the Creator is infinitely Good. In short, thus, All that we call *Evil* is either an *Evil of Imperfection*, as the *Want of certain Faculties and Excellencies which other Creatures have*; or *Natural Evil*, as *Pain, Death*, and the like; or *Moral Evil*, as all Kinds of *Vice*. The *First* of these is not properly an Evil. For every Power, Faculty, or Perfection, which any Creature enjoys, being the Free Gift of God, which he was no more obliged to bestow than he was to confer Being or Existence itself; 'tis plain the Want of any certain Faculty or Perfection, in any Kind of Creatures, which never belonged to their Nature, is no more an Evil to Them, than their never having been Created or brought into Being at all could properly have been called an Evil. The *Second* Kind of Evil, which we call *Natural Evil*, is either a Necessary Consequence of the Former; as *Death* to a Creature on whose Nature Immortality was never conferred; and then 'tis no more properly an Evil

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than the Former : Or else 'tis counterpoised in the Whole with as great or greater Good, as the *Afflictions and Sufferings of Good Men* ; and then also it is not properly an Evil : Or else lastly, 'tis a *Punishment* ; and then 'tis a Necessary Consequence of the *Third* and last Sort of Evil, viz. *Moral Evil*. And *This* arises wholly from the Abuse of *Liberty*, which God gave to his Creatures for other Purposes, and which 'twas reasonable and fit to give them for the Perfection and Order of the whole Creation : Only They, contrary to God's Intention and Command, have abused what was Necessary for the Perfection of the Whole, to the Corruption and Depravation of themselves. And thus all Sorts of Evils have entered into the World, without any Diminution to the Infinite Goodness of the Creator and Governor thereof.

That the Supreme Cause and Author of all Things must of Necessity be Infinitely Wise.

XI. *The Supreme Cause and Author of all Things must of Necessity be Infinitely Wise.* This Proposition is evidently Consequent upon those that have already been proved : And those being established, This, as admitting no further Dispute, needs not to be largely insisted upon. For nothing is more evident, than that an *Infinite, Omnipresent, Intelligent Being* must know perfectly *all Things that are* ; And that He who alone is *Self-Existent and Eternal, the sole Cause and Author of all Things, from whom alone all the Powers of all Things are derived, and on whom they continually depend* ; must also know perfectly all the Consequences of those Powers, that is, *all Possibilities of Things to come*, and what in every Respect is Best and Wisest to be done : And that, having *Infinite Power*, he can never be controuled or prevented from doing what he so knows to be Fittest. From all which it manifestly follows,

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follows, that every Effect of the Supreme Cause must be the Product of Infinite Wisdom. More particularly : The Supreme Being, because he is *Infinite*, must be every-where present : And, because he is an Infinite *Mind* or *Intelligence*, therefore wherever he Is his Knowledge Is, which is inseparable from his Being, and must therefore be Infinite likewise : And wherever his Infinite Knowledge is, it must necessarily have a *full and perfect* Prospect of all Things, and nothing can be concealed from its Inspection : He includes and surrounds every Thing with his boundless Presence ; and penetrates every Part of their Substance with his All-seeing Eye : So that the inmost Nature and Essence of all Things are Perfectly Naked and Open to his View ; and even the deepest Thoughts of Intelligent Beings themselves manifest in his Sight. Further, All Things being not only present to him, but also intirely *Depending* upon him, and having *received* both their Being itself, and all their Powers and Faulties *from Him* ; 'tis manifest that, as he knows all Things that *are*, so he must likewise know all Possibilities of Things, that is, all Effects that *Can be*. For, being himself Alone Self-Existent, and having Alone *given* to all Things all the Powers and Faculties they are indued with ; 'tis evident He must of Necessity know perfectly what All and Each of those Powers and Faculties, which are *derived wholly from himself*, can possibly Produce : And seeing at one boundless View all the possible Compositions and Divisions, Variations and Changes, Circumstances and Dependencies of Things ; all their possible Relations one to another, and their Dispositions or Fitnesses to certain and respective Ends ; he must, without Possibility of Error, know exactly what is Best and Properest in every one of

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the Infinite Possible Cases or Methods of Disposing Things ; and understand perfectly how to order and direct the respective Means to bring about what he so knows to be, in its Kind, or in the Whole, the Best and Fittest in the End. This is what we mean by *Infinite Wisdom*. And having before shewn (which indeed is also evident of itself) that the Supreme Cause is moreover *All-Powerful* ; so that He can no more be prevented by Force or Opposition, than he can be hindered by Error or Mistake, from *Effecting* always what is absolutely Fittest and Wisest to be done ; It follows undeniably that he is *actually and effectually*, in the highest and most complete Sense, *Ininitely Wise* ; and that the World, and all Things therein, must be and are Effects of Infinite Wisdom. This is Demonstration *à priori*. The Proof *à posteriori* of the Infinite Wisdom of God, from the Consideration of the Exquisite Perfection and Consummate Excellency of his Works, is no less strong and undeniable. But I shall not enlarge upon This Argument, because it has often already been accurately and strongly urged, to the everlasting Shame and Confusion of Atheists, by the ablest and learnedest

* See Galen *de Usu Partium*, Tully *de Natura Deorum*, Boyle of *Final Causes*, Mr. Ray of *the Wisdom of God in the Creation*, Mr. Derham's *Physico-Theology*, &c.

† *Opinionum Commenta delet dies, naturæ judicia confirmat. Cicero.*

* Writers both of Ancient and Modern Times. I shall here observe only this One Thing ; That the older the World grows, and the deeper Men inquire into Things, and the more Accurate Observations they make, and the more and greater † Discoveries they find out ; the stronger this Argument continually grows : Which is a certain Evidence of its being founded in Truth. If Galen, so many Ages since, could find in the Construction and Constitution of the Parts of a Human

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Human Body such undeniable Marks of Contrivance and Design as forced him *Then* to acknowledge and admire the Wisdom of its Author; What would he have said if he had known the *Late Discoveries* in Anatomy and Physic, the Circulation of the Blood, the exact Structure of the Heart and Brain, the Uses of Numberless Glands and Valves for the Secretion and Motion of the Juices in the Body; besides several Veins and other Vessels and Receptacles not at all known, or so much as imagined to have any Existence, in *His Days*; but which *Now* are discovered to serve the wisest and most exquisite Ends imaginable? If the Arguments against the Belief of the Being of an All-wise Creator and Governor of the World, which *Epicurus* and his Follower *Lucretius* drew from the *Faults* which they imagined they could find in the Frame and Constitution of the *Earth*, were so Poor and Inconsiderable, that, even in that Infancy of Natural Philosophy, the Generality of Men contemned and despised them as of no Force; How would they have been ashamed if they had lived in These Days; when those very Things, which they thought to be Faults and Blunders in the Constitution of Nature, are discovered to be very useful and of exceeding Benefit to the Preservation and Well-being of the Whole? And, to mention no more, If *Tully*, from the partial and very imperfect Knowledge in Astronomy which *His Times* afforded, could be so confident of the Heavenly Bodies being Disposed and Moved by a Wise and Understanding Mind, as to declare, that, in His Opinion, whoever asserted the contrary was himself * void of all Understanding; What would He have said if he had known the *Modern Discoveries* in Astronomy?

*Coelestem ergo admirabilem ordinem incredibilemque constantiam, ex qua conservatio & salus omnium omnis oritur qui vacare mente putat; ipse mentis expers habendus est. *De Natura Deorum, Lib. 2*

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ne *Immense Greatness* of the World, (I mean of that Part of it which falls under our Observation) which is now known to be as much greater than what in His Time they imagined it to be, as the World itself, according to their System, was greater than *Archimedes's* Sphere? The *Exquisite Regularity* of all the Planets Motions, without Epicycles, Stations, Retrogradations, or any other Deviation or Confusion whatsoever? The *inexpressible Nicety* of the Adjustment of the Primary Velocity and Original Direction of the *Annual* Motion of the Planets, with their Distance from the Central Body, and their Force of Gravitation towards it? The *wonderful Proportion* of the *Diurnal* Motion of the Earth and other Planets about their own Centers, for the Distinction of Light and Darknes; without that monstrously disproportionate Whirling of the whole Heavens, which the Ancient Astronomers were forced to suppose? The *exact Accomodating* of

the * *Densities* of the Planets to their Distances from the Sun, and consequently to the Proportion of Heat which each of them is to bear respectively; so that neither those which are nearest to the Sun are destroyed by the Heat; nor those which are farthest off by the Cold; but each one enjoys a Temperature suited to *its* proper Uses, as the Earth is to *ours*?

The *Admirable Order, Number, and*

Usefulness of the several *Moons*, (as I may very properly call them) never dreamed of by Antiquity, but now by the Help of Telescopes *clearly and distinctly seen* to move about their respective Planets; and whose Motions are so exactly known, that their very Eclipses are as certainly calculated and foretold

as

* Planetarum densitates fere sunt, ut radices diametrorum apparentium applicatae ad diametros veras, hoc est, reciproce ut distantiae Planetarum a sole, ductae in radices diametrorum apparentium. Collocavit igitur Deus Planetas in diversis distantis a Sole, ut quilibet, pro gradu densitatis, calore Solis majore vel minore fruatur. Newton. Princip. Lib. 3. Prop. 8.

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as those of our own Moon? The *strange Adjustment* of *our* Moon's Motion *about its own Center* once in a Month, with its Motion about the Earth in the same Period of Time, to such a Degree of Exactness, that *by that Means* the same Face is always obverted to the Earth without any sensible Variation? The wonderful Motions of the *Comets*, which are Now known to be as exact, regular, and periodical, as the Motions of other Planets? Lastly, the Preservation of the *several Systems*, and of the *several Planets* and *Comets* in the *same System*, from *falling upon* each other; which in infinite past Time (had there been no *Intelligent Governor* of the *Whole*) could not but have been the Effect of the smallest possible *Resistance* made by the *finest Æther*, and even by the *Rays of Light themselves* to the *Motions* (supposing it possible there ever could have been any *Motions*) of Those Bodies? What, I say, would *Tully*, that great Master of Reason, have thought and said if these and other newly discovered Instances of the inexpressible Accuracy and Wisdom of the Works of God had been found out and known in *His Time*? Certainly Atheism, which *Then* was altogether unable to withstand the Arguments drawn from This Topic; must *now*, upon the additional Strength of these later Observations, (which are *every one* an unanswerable Proof of the incomprehensible Wisdom of the Creator) be utterly ashamed to show its Head. We *Now* see with how great Reason the Author of the Book of *Ecclesiasticus*, after he had described the Beauty of the Sun and Stars, and all the then visible Works of God in Heaven and Earth, concluded, *ch. xliii. v. 32*, (as *We*, after all the Discoveries of later Ages, may no Doubt still truly say) *There are yet hid greater Things than these, and we have seen but a few of his Works.*

XII. Lastly,

A Demonstration of the

*the Au-
thor of all
Things
must be
Infinitely
Good, Just,
and True.*

XII. Lastly, *The Supreme Cause and Author of all Things must of Necessity be a Being of Infinite Goodness, Justice, and Truth, and all other Moral Perfections; such as become the Supreme Governor and Judge of the World.* That there are *Different Relations* of Things one towards another is as certain as that there are *Different Things* in the World. That, from these *Different Relations* of *Different Things*, there necessarily arises an *Agreement* or *Disagreement* of some Things to others, or a *Fitness* or *Unfitness* of the Application of *Different Things* or *Different Relations* one to another, is likewise as certain as that there is any *Difference* in the Nature of Things, or that *Different Things* do Exist. Further, that there is a *Fitness* or *Suitableness* of certain *Circumstances* to certain *Persons*, and an *Unsuitableness* of Others, founded in the *Nature of Things* and in the *Qualifications of Persons*, antecedent to *Will* and to *All Arbitrary or Positive Appointment whatsoever*, must unavoidably be acknowledged by every one who will not affirm that 'tis *equally Fit and Suitable*, in the *Nature and Reason of Things*, that an Innocent Being should be *extremely and eternally Miserable*, as that it should be *Free* from such Misery. There is therefore such a Thing as *Fitness* and *Unfitness*, eternally, necessarily, and unchangeably, in the *Nature and Reason of Things*. Now What these *Relations of Things* absolutely and necessarily *Are* in Themselves, That also they *Appear to be*, to the Understanding of all Intelligent Beings, except Those only who understand Things to be what they are not, that is, whose Understandings are either very imperfect or very much depraved. And, by this *Understanding or Knowledge* of the Natural and Necessary Relations of Things, the *Actions likewise* of all Intelligent Beings are constantly directed, (which *by the Way* is the true Ground and Foundation of all Morality) unless

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unless their *Will* be corrupted by particular *Interest* or *Affection*, or swayed by some unreasonable and prevailing Lust. The Supreme Cause, therefore, and Author of all Things, since (as has already ^{pages 100} been proved) he must of Necessity have Infinite ^{§ 101.} Knowledge, and the Perfection of *Wisdom*; so that 'tis absolutely impossible he should *Err*, or be in any Respect *Ignorant* of the True Relations and Fitness or Unfitness of Things, or be by any Means *Deceived* or imposed upon herein: And since he is likewise *Self-Existent*, absolutely *Independent*, and *All-Powerful*, so that, having no *Want* of any Thing, 'tis impossible his *Will* should be influenced by any wrong *Affection*; and, having no *Dependence*, 'tis impossible his *Power* should be limited by any Superior Strength: 'Tis evident He must of Necessity (meaning not a *Necessity of Fate*, but such a *Moral Necessity* as I before said was consistent with the ^{pages 93} most perfect Liberty) *Do* always what he *Knows* to ^{§ 94.} be *Fittest to be done*; That is, He must act always according to the strictest Rules of Infinite *Goodness*, *Justice*, and *Truth*, and all other *Moral Perfections*. In Particular, The Supreme Cause must in the first Place be infinitely *Good*; that is, he must have an unalterable Disposition to *Do* and to *Communicate* Good or Happiness: Because, being himself necessarily *Happy* in the Eternal Enjoyment of his own Infinite Perfections, he cannot possibly have any other Motives to make any Creatures at all, but only that he may communicate to Them his Own Perfections, according to their different *Capacities*, arising from that *Variety of Natures*, which it was fit for *Infinite Wisdom* to produce; and according to their different *Improvements*, arising from that *Liberty* which is essentially Necessary to the Constitution of *Intelligent* and *Active Beings*. That he must be infinitely *Good* appears likewise further from hence, that,

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that, being necessarily *All-Sufficient*, he must consequently be infinitely removed from all *Malice* and *Envy*, and from all other possible Causes or Temptations of doing Evil; which, 'tis evident, can only be Effects of *Want* and *Weakness*, of *Imperfection* or *Depravation*. Again, The Supreme Cause and Author of all Things must in like Manner be infinitely *Just*: Because, the *Rule of Equity* being nothing else but the *Very Nature* of Things, and their *necessary Relations* one to Another; And the *Execution of Justice* being nothing else but a suiting the *Circumstances of Things* to the *Qualifications of Persons*, according to the Original *Fitness* and *Agreeableness*, which I have before shewn to be *Necessarily in Nature*, antecedent to *Will* and to *all positive Appointment*; 'Tis evident that He who *knows perfectly* this Rule of Equity, and necessarily *judges of Things as they are*; who has *complete Power* to Execute Justice according to that Knowledge, and *No possible Temptation* to deviate in the least therefrom; who can neither be *imposed upon* by any *Deceit*, nor *swayed* by any *Byass*, nor *awed* by any *Power*; must of Necessity do always that which is *Right*; without Iniquity, and without Partiality; without Prejudice, and without Respect of Persons. Lastly, That the Supreme Cause and Author of all Things must be *True and Faithful* in all his *Declarations* and all his Promises, is most evident. For the only Possible Reason of Falsifying is either *Rashness* or *Forgetfulness*, *Inconstancy* or *Impotency*, *Fear of Evil*, or *Hope*

* Οὐκ ἔστιν ὃ ἐνεκα αὐτοῦ Θεὸς ψεύδοιτο. — Κορινθ. α' α' α' ο Θεὸς ἐπληρὴ καὶ ἀληθὴς ἐν τε ἔργῳ καὶ ἐν λόγῳ. Καὶ ὅτε αὐτὸς μεδίσταται ὅτε ἄλλας ἐξαπαλᾷ, ὅτε κατὰ φαντασίας, ὅτε κατὰ λόγους, ὅτε κατὰ σημείων πομπᾶς, ἔθ' ὅτι παρ' ἐδ' ὄναρ. *Plato de Repub. Lib. 2. sub Finem.*

of Gain: From * all which an Infinitely *Wise*, *All-Sufficient*, and *Good Being* must of Necessity be infinitely removed: And consequently, as 'tis impossible for him to be deceived himself, so neither is it possible for him in any
wise

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wise *to deceive* Others. In a Word: All Evil and all Imperfections whatsoever arise plainly either from *Shortness of Understanding, Defect of Power, or Faultiness of Will*; And this last evidently from some *Impotency, Corruption, or Depravation*; being nothing else but a direct Chusing to Act contrary to the known Reason and Nature of Things. From all which, it being manifest that the Supreme Cause and Author of all Things cannot but be infinitely removed, it follows undeniably, that he must of Necessity be *a Being of Infinite Goodness, Justice, and Truth, and all other Moral Perfections.*

To this Argumentation *à priori* there can be opposed but one Objection that I know of, drawn on the contrary *à posteriori*, from Experience and Observation of the Unequal Distributions of Providence in the World. But (besides the just Vindication of the Wisdom and Goodness of Providence in its Dispensations, even with Respect to this *Present* World only, which *Plutarch* and other Heathen Writers have judiciously made) the Objection itself is intirely wide of the Question. For, concerning the Justice and Goodness of God, (as of any Governor whatsoever) no Judgment is to be made from a partial View of a few small Portions of his Dispensations, but from an intire Consideration of the Whole; And consequently not only the short Duration of this present State, but moreover all that is past, and that is still to come, must be taken into the Account: And Then every Thing will clearly appear Just and Right.

From this Account of the Moral Attributes of God, it follows,

1st, That though All the Actions of God are *The Necessary* intirely *Free*, and consequently the Exercise of his *sity of God's* Moral Attributes cannot be said to be Necessary, *Moral At-* in the same Sense of Necessity as his Existence and *tributes* Eternity are Necessary; yet these Moral Attributes *consistent* *with per-* are *fect Liberty*

A Demonstration of the

are really and truly Necessary by such a Necessity as, though it be *not at all inconsistent with Liberty, yet is equally Certain, Infallible, and to be depended upon, as even the Existence itself, or the Eternity of God. For though nothing is more
page 58. Certain (as has been already proved in the Ninth Proposition of this Discourse) than that God acts, not necessarily, but voluntarily, with particular Intention and Design, knowing that he does Good, and intending to do so, freely and out of Choice, and when he has no other Constraint upon him but this, that his Goodness inclines his Will to communicate himself, and to do Good; so that the Divine Nature is under no Necessity but such as is consistent with the most perfect Liberty and free'st Choice: (Which is the Ground of all our Prayers and Thanksgivings; the Reason why we pray to him to be good to us and gracious, and thank him for being just and merciful; whereas no Man prays to him to be Omnipresent, or thanks him for being Omnipotent, or for knowing all Things :) Though nothing, I say, is more certain than that God acts, not necessarily, but voluntarily; yet 'tis nevertheless as truly and absolutely impossible for God not to do (or to do any Thing contrary to) what his Moral Attributes require him to do, as if he was really, not a Free, but a Necessary Agent. And the Reason hereof is plain: Because infinite Knowledge, Power, and Goodness, in Conjunction, may, notwithstanding the most perfect Freedom and Choice, act with altogether as much Certainty and Unalterable Steadiness, as even the Necessity of Fate can be supposed to do. Nay, these Perfections cannot possibly but so act, because Free Choice, in a Being of Infinite Knowledge, Power, and Goodness, can no more chuse to act contrary to these Perfections, than Knowledge can be Ignorance,
Power

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Power be *Weakness*, or *Goodness* *Malice* : So that *Free Choice*, in Such a Being, may be as *Certain* and *Steady* a Principle of Action as the *Necessity* of Fate. We may therefore as certainly and infallibly rely upon the *Moral*, as upon the *Natural* Attributes of God : It being as absolutely impossible for Him to act contrary to the One, as to Divest himself of the Other ; And as much a Contradiction to suppose him Chusing to Do any Thing inconsistent with his Justice, Goodness, and Truth, as to suppose him divested of Infinity, Power, or Existence. The One is contrary to the *Immediate and Absolute Necessity* of his Nature ; The Other to the *Unalterable Rectitude* of his Will. The One is in itself an *Immediate Contradiction* in the Terms ; The Other is an *express Contradiction* to the *Necessary Perfections* of the Divine Nature. To suppose the One is saying absolutely that *Something is at the same Time that it is not* : To suppose the Other is to say that *Infinite Knowledge* can Act *Ignorantly*, *Infinite Power* *Weakly*, or that *Infinite Wisdom and Goodness* can do Things *Not Good or Wise to be done*. All which are *equally great and equally manifest* Absurdities. This, I conceive, is a very *Intelligible Account* of the *Moral Attributes* of God ; satisfactory to the Mind, and without *Perplexity* and *Confusion* of Ideas. I might have said it at once, (as the Truth most certainly is) that Justice, Goodness, and all the other *Moral Attributes* of God, are as *Essential* to the Divine Nature, as the *Natural Attributes* of *Eternity*, *Infinity*, and the like. But because all *Atheistical Persons*, after they are fully convinced that there must needs be in the Universe some one *Eternal, Necessary, Infinite, and All-powerful Being*, will still with unreasonable *Obstinacy* contend, that they can by no Means see any necessary *Connexion* of *Goodness, Justice,*

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Justice, or any other *Moral* Attribute, with these Natural Perfections: Therefore I chose to endeavour to demonstrate the Moral Attributes, by a particular Deduction, in the Manner I have now done.

Of the Necessity of God's doing always what is Best and Fittest in the Whole.

2dly, From hence it follows, that, though God is a most perfectly *free* Agent, yet he cannot but do always what is Best and Wisest in the Whole. The Reason is evident: Because Perfect Wisdom and Goodness are as *Steady and Certain* Principles of Action as Necessity itself. And an Infinitely Wise and Good Being, indued with the most perfect Liberty, can no more chuse to act in Contradiction to Wisdom and Goodness, than a Necessary Agent can act contrary to the Necessity by which it is acted: It being as great an Absurdity, and Impossibility *in Choice*, for Infinite Wisdom to chuse to act Unwisely, or Infinite Goodness to chuse what is not Good, as it would be *in Nature* for absolute Necessity to fail of producing its necessary Effect. There was indeed no *Necessity in Nature* that God should at first create such Beings as he has created, or indeed any Beings at all; because He is in Himself Infinitely Happy and All-sufficient. There was also no *Necessity in Nature* that he should preserve and continue Things in Being after they were created; because he would be as Self-sufficient without their Continuance as he was before their Creation. But it was Fit, and Wise, and Good, that Infinite Wisdom should manifest, and Infinite Goodness communicate itself. And therefore it was *Necessary* (in the *Sense of Necessity I am now speaking of*) that Things should be made at such Time, and continued so long, and indued with various Perfections, in such Degrees as Infinite Wisdom and Goodness saw it Wisest and Best that they should. And *when and whilst* Things
are

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are in Being, the same Moral Perfections make Necessary that they should be disposed and governed according to the exactest and most unchangeable Laws of Eternal Justice, Goodness, and Truth; Because, while *Things* and their *several Relations* are, they cannot but *be* what they are; and an Infinitely Wise Being cannot but *know* them to be what they are, and *judge* always *rightly* concerning the several *Fitnesses* or *Unfitnesses* of them; and an Infinitely Good Being cannot but *chuse* to *act* always according to this Knowledge of the respective *Fitness* of *Things*: It being as truly impossible for such a *Free Agent*, who is absolutely incapable of being Deceived or Depraved, to *chuse*, by acting contrary to these Laws, to destroy its own *Perfections*, as for *Necessary Existence* to be able to destroy its own *Being*.

3dly, From hence it follows, that though God is both Perfectly *Free*, and also Infinitely *Powerful*, yet he cannot Possibly do any Thing that is *Evil*. The Reason of this also is Evident: Because, as 'tis manifest Infinite Power cannot extend to Natural Contradictions, which imply a Destruction of that very Power by which they must be supposed to be effected; so neither can it extend to Moral Contradictions, which imply a Destruction of some other Attributes, as necessarily belonging to the Divine Nature as Power. I have already shewn that Justice, Goodness, and Truth, are necessarily in God, even as necessarily as Power, and Understanding, and Knowledge of the Nature of Things. 'Tis therefore as Impossible and Contradictory to suppose *his Will* should *chuse* to do any Thing contrary to Justice, Goodness, or Truth, as that *his Power* should *be able* to do any Thing inconsistent with Power. 'Tis no Diminution of Power not to be able to *do* Things which are no Object of Power:

Of the Impossibility of his doing Evil.

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'tis in like Manner no Diminution either of Power or Liberty to have such a Perfect and Unalterable Rectitude of Will, as never Possibly to *chuse* to do any Thing inconsistent with that Rectitude.

That Liberty is not in itself an Imperfection, but a Perfection.

4thly, From hence it follows, that Liberty, properly speaking, is not in itself an Imperfection, but a Perfection. For it is in the highest and completest Degree in *God himself*; Every Act wherein He exercises any Moral Attribute, as Goodness, Justice, or Truth, proceeding from the most Perfect Liberty and Free'st Choice; without which, Goodness would not be Goodness, nor Justice and Truth any Excellencies; these Things, in the very Idea and formal Notion of them, utterly excluding all Necessity. It has indeed been sometimes taught that Liberty is a great *Imperfection*, because it is the Occasion of all Sin and Misery. But, if we will speak properly, 'tis not Liberty that exposes us to Misery, but only the Abuse of Liberty. 'Tis true, Liberty makes Men *capable* of Sin, and consequently liable to Misery; neither of which they could possibly be without Liberty. But he that will say every Thing is an Imperfection, by the Abuse whereof a Creature may become more unhappy than if God had never given it that Power at all, must say that a *Stone* is a more Excellent and Perfect Creature than *Man*, because it is not capable of making itself miserable, as Man is. And, by the same Argument, Reason and Knowledge, and every other Perfection, nay, even Existence itself, will be proved to be an Imperfection; because 'tis That without which a Creature could not be miserable. The Truth therefore is, The Abuse of Liberty, that is, the Corruption and Depravation of That without which no Creatures could be happy, is the alone Cause of their Misery: But, as for Liberty itself, it is a great Perfection: And

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And the more Perfect any Creature is, the more Perfect is its Liberty: And the perfectest Liberty of all is such Liberty as can never, by any Ignorance, Deceit, or Corruption, be biaſſed or diverted from Chusing, what is the Proper Object of Free Choice, the greateſt Good.

5thly, From hence it follows, that, though probably no Rational Creature can be, in a ſtrict Philoſophical Senſe, *Impeccable*, yet we may eaſily conceive how God can place ſuch Creatures, as he judges worthy of ſo excellent a Gift, in ſuch a State of Knowledge and near Communion with himſelf, where Goodneſs and Holineſs ſhall appear ſo amiable, and where they ſhall be exempt from all Means of Temptation and Corruption, that it ſhall never be poſſible for them, notwithstanding the Natural Liberty of their Will, to be ſeduced from their unchangeable Happineſs in the Everlaſting Choice and Enjoyment of their greateſt Good. Which is the State of Good Angels, and of the Saints in Heaven.

That the
highest
Moral Per-
fections of
Rational
Creatures
do not
exclude
Natural
Liberty.

That the
Grounds of
all Moral
Obligati-
ons are
Eternal
and Neceſ-
sary, and
depend not
on any
Laws.
** page 106.*

Lastly, From what has been ſaid upon this Head, it follows, that the true Ground and Foundation of all Eternal Moral Obligations is This, that the ſame Reaſons, (*viz.* the forementioned* Neceſſary and Eternal *different Relations* which *different Things* bear to one another, and the conſequent *Fitness* or *Unfitness* of the Application of different Things, or different Relations, one to another, unavoidably ariſing from that Difference of the Things themſelves) theſe very ſame Reaſons, I ſay, which always and neceſſarily *do* determine the Will of God, as hath been before ſhewn, *ought* alſo conſtantly to determine the Will of all Subordinate Intelligent Beings. And, when they do not, then ſuch Beings, ſetting up their own unreaſonable Self-Will in Oppoſition to the Nature and Reaſon of Things, endeavour (as much as in them lies) to make Things be what they

A Demonstration of the

y are not and cannot be : Which is the highest Presumption and greatest Insolence imaginable: 'Tis acting contrary to their own Reason and Knowledge: 'Tis an attempting to destroy that Order by which the Universe subsists: And 'tis also, by Consequence, offering the highest Affront imaginable to the Creator of all Things, who himself governs all his Actions by these Rules, and cannot but require the same of all his reasonable Creatures. They who found all Moral Obligations ultimately in the *Will* of God must recur at Length to the same Thing; only with this Difference, that they do not clearly explain how the *Nature and Will of God himself* must be necessarily Good and Just, as I have endeavoured to do. They who found all Moral Obligations only upon *Laws* made for the Good of Societies, hold an Opinion which (besides that 'tis fully confuted by what has been already said concerning the Eternal and Necessary Difference of Things) is moreover so directly and manifestly contradictory and inconsistent with itself, that it seems strange it should not have been more commonly taken Notice of. For, if there be no Difference between Good and Evil, antecedent to all Laws, there can be no Reason given why any Laws should be made at all, when all Things are naturally indifferent. To say that Laws are necessary to be made for the Good of Mankind, is confessing that certain Things tend to the Good of Mankind; that is, to the preserving and perfecting of their Nature; which Wise Men *therefore* think necessary to be established by Laws. And if the Reason why certain Things are established by wise and good Laws, is because those Things tend to the Good of Mankind, 'tis manifest they were good, antecedent to their being confirmed by Laws. Otherwise, if they were not good, antecedent to all Laws, 'tis evident there could be no Reason why such Laws should be made rather than the contrary. Which is the greatest Absurdity in the World.

A.N.D.

Being and Attributes of God.

AND now, from what has been said upon this *The Con-*
Argument, I hope 'tis in the Whole suffici-*clusion.*
ently clear that the Being and Attributes of God
are, to attentive and considering Minds, abundantly
capable of just Proof and Demonstration; and that
the Adversaries of God and Religion have not *Rea-*
son on their Side, (to which they would pretend to
be strict Adherers) but merely vain Confidence, and
great Blindness and Prejudice, when they desire it
should be thought, that, in the Fabric of the World,
God has left himself wholly without Witness, and
that all the Arguments of Nature are on the Side
of Atheism and Irreligion. Some Men, I know,
there are, who, having never turned their Thoughts
to Matters of this Nature, think that these Things
are all absolutely above our Comprehension; and
that we talk about we know not what when we dis-
pute about these Questions. But, since the most
considerable Atheists, that ever appeared in the
World, and the Pleaders for Universal Fatality,
have All thought fit to argue in this Way, in their
Attempts to remove the First Foundations of Re-
ligion, 'tis Reasonable and Necessary that they
should be opposed in their own Way; It being
most certain that no Argumentation, of what Kind
soever, can possibly be made Use of on the Side of
Error, but may also be used with much greater
Advantage on the Behalf of Truth.

2. From what has been said upon this Argument,
we may see how it comes to pass, that, though
nothing is so certain and undeniable as the Necess-
sary Existence of God, and the consequent Deduc-
tion of all his Attributes, yet Men, who have never
attended to the Evidence of Reason, and the Notices
that God hath given us of Himself, may easily be in
a great Measure ignorant of Both. That the Three
Angles of a Triangle are equal to Two right Ones

A Demonstration of the

so certain and evident, that whoever affirms the contrary, affirms what may very easily be reduced to an express Contradiction : Yet whoever turns not his Mind to consider it at all, may easily be ignorant of This and numberless other the like Mathematical and most infallible Truths.

3. Yet the Notices that God has been pleased to give us of himself are so many and so obvious, in the Constitution, Order, Beauty, and Harmony, of the several Parts of the World ; in the Frame and Structure of our own Bodies, and the wonderful Powers and Faculties of our Souls ; in the unavoidable Apprehensions of our own Minds, and the common Consent of all other Men ; in every Thing within us, and every Thing without us ; that no Man, of the meanest Capacity and greatest Disadvantages whatsoever, with the slightest and most superficial Observation of the Works of God, and the lowest and most obvious Attendance to the Reason of Things, can be ignorant of *Him* ; but he must be utterly without Excuse. Possibly he may not indeed be able to understand, or be affected by, nice and Metaphysical Demonstrations of the Being and Attributes of God : But then, for the same Reason, he is obliged also not to suffer himself to be shaken and unsettled by the subtle Sophistries of Sceptical and Atheistical Men ; which he cannot perhaps answer, because he cannot understand. But he is bound to adhere to those Things which he knows, and those Reasonings he is capable to judge of ; which are abundantly sufficient to determine and to guide the Practice of sober and considering Men.

4. But this is not all. God has moreover finally, by a clear and express *Revelation* of Himself, brought down from Heaven by his own Son, our Blessed Lord and Redeemer, and suited to every Capacity and Understanding, put to Silence the

Being and Attributes of God.

the Ignorance of Foolish, and the Vanity of
tical and Profane Men. And, by declaring
us Himself his own Nature and Attributes, he
has effectually prevented all Mistakes which the
Weakness of our Reason, the Negligence of our
Application, the Corruption of our Nature, or the
false Philosophy of Wicked and Profane Men,
might have led us into ; And so has infallibly fur-
nished us with sufficient Knowledge to inable us
to perform our Duty in this Life, and to obtain
our Happiness in that which is to come. But this
exceeds the Bounds of my present Subject, and
deserves to be handled in a particular Discourse.

F I N I S.



A
DISCOURSE

Concerning the
Unchangeable Obligations

O F
NATURAL RELIGION,

AND THE
TRUTH and CERTAINTY

O F T H E
Christian Revelation :

Being Eight SERMONS, Preached at the Cathedral
Church of St. PAUL, in the Year 1705, at the
Lecture Founded by the Honourable ROBERT
BOYLE, Esq;

By SAMUEL CLARKE, D. D.
Late Rector of St. James's, Westminster.

The TENTH EDITION, Corrected.

Isa. v. 20. *Woe unto them that call Evil Good, and Good Evil; that
put Darkneſs for Light, and Light for Darkneſs; that put Bitter for
Sweet, and Sweet for Bitter.*

Rom. i. 22. *Profeſſing themſelves to be Wiſe, they became Fools.*

1 Cor. ii. 10. *But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit.*

DISCOURS

Unchangeable Obligations

NATURAL RELIGION,

TRUTH AND CERTAINTY

Christian Religion:

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Request of the Honorable ROBERT
BOYLE, Esq;

BY SAMUEL CLARKE, D.D.
Rector of St. Paul's Church.

The Fifth Sermon, Concerning

the Nature and Extent of the Christian's Duty,
in Relation to his Neighbour, and his
Obligations to him, as a Christian.
The Sixth Sermon, Concerning the Christian's
Duty to himself, and to his Soul.

T O T H E

Most Reverend Father in God

T H O M A S

Lord Archbishop of *Canterbury*,
and Primate of all *England*;

Sir H E N R Y A S H U R S T,
Baronet;

Sir J O H N R O T H E R A M,
Knight, Serjeant at Law;

J O H N E V E L I N, *Esquire*;

T R U S T E E S

Appointed by the

Hon. R O B E R T B O Y L E, *Esquire*;

This D I S C O U R S E

Is humbly Dedicated.

TO THE
Most Reverend Father in God

THOMAS
Lord Archbishop of Canterbury,
and Primate of all England;

SH HENRY ASHURST,
Baronet;

SH JOHN ROTHAM,
Knight, Sergeant at Law;

JOHN EVELIN, Esquire;

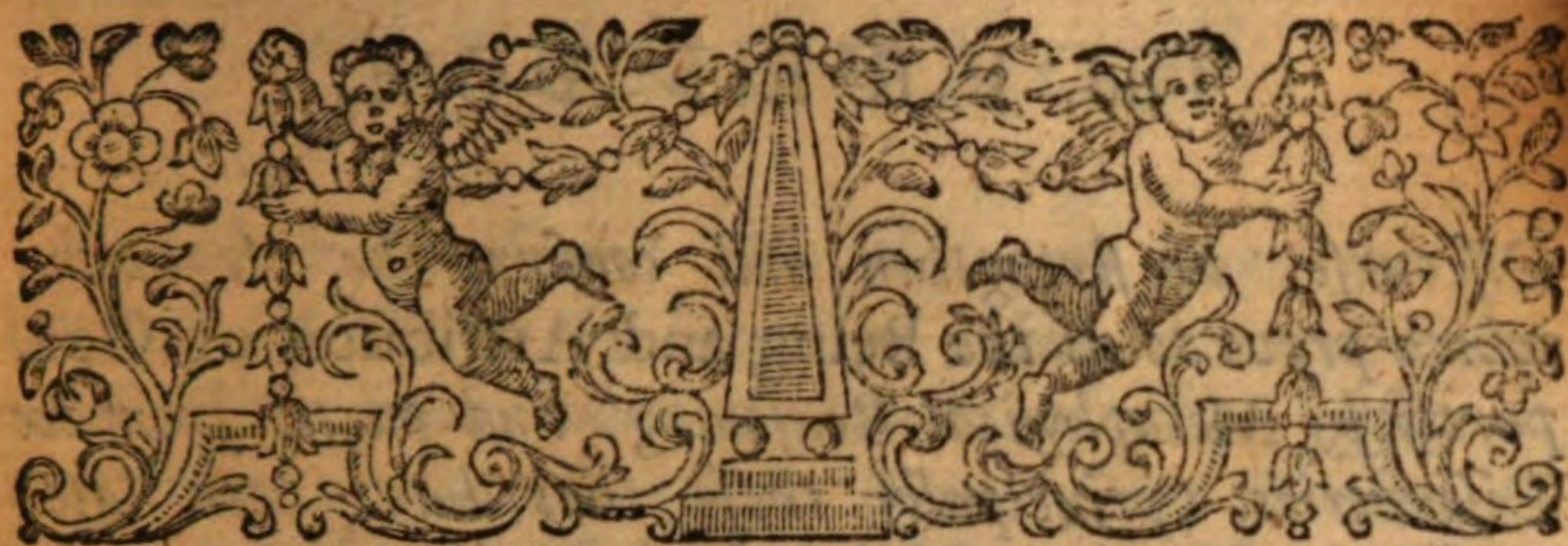
TRUSTEES

Appointed by the

Hon. ROBERT BOYLE, Esquire;

THE DISCOURT

In humble Dedication



T H E
P R E F A C E.



Should not have presumed to publish these Papers, in Vindication of Natural and Revealed Religion, after so many excellent Discourses already written upon that Subject, had I not thought myself obliged to it, in order to pursue more fully the Design of the Honourable Founder of this Lecture, and to answer the Expectation of the Most Reverend and the Honourable Trustees appointed by him. The Honourable Robert Boyle, Esq; was a Person no less zealously solicitous for the Propagation of true Religion and the Practice of Piety and Virtue, than diligent and successful in improving Experimental Philosophy, and enlarging our Knowledge of Nature. And it was his settled Opinion, that the Advancement and Increase of Natural Knowledge would always be of Service to the Cause and Interest of true Religion, in Opposition to Atheists and Unbelievers of all Sorts. Accordingly he, in his Life-time, made excellent Use of his own Observations to this Purpose, in all his Writings; and made Provision, after his Death, for carrying on the same Design perpetually. In Pursuance of which End I endeavoured, in my former Discourse,

The P R E F A C E.

Discourse, to strengthen and confirm the Arguments which prove to us the Being and Attributes of God, partly by Metaphysical Reasoning, and partly from the Discoveries (principally those that have been lately made) in Natural Philosophy. And, in the present Treatise, I have attempted, in a plainer and easier Method, to establish the Unalterable Obligations of Natural Religion, and the Truth and Certainty of the Christian Revelation. If what I have said may in any Measure promote the Interest of true Religion, in this sceptical and profane Age, and answer the Design for which this Lecture was founded, I have my End.

It may perhaps be expected that I should take some Notice of certain Remarks which have been published upon my former Sermons. Had the Author of those Remarks entered into the Merits of the Cause, or offered any considerable Reasons in Opposition to what I had laid down, I should have thought myself obliged to give him a particular Answer. But since his Book is made up chiefly of Railing, and gross Misconstructions; and All that he pretends to say, by Way of Argument, depends intirely upon Supposition of the Truth of the Cartesian Hypothesis, which the best Mathematicians in the World have demonstrated to be false, I presume it may be sufficient to shew here the Insincerity of that Author, and the Weakness of his Reasoning, by a few brief Observations.

*The only Argument he alledges against me in his whole Book is This: That, if we know not distinctly what the * Essence of God, and what the Essence of Matter is, we cannot possibly demonstrate them, at all, to be Two different Essences.*

* Note, That, in this whole Question, the Word *Essence* is not to be taken in the proper Metaphysical Sense of the

Word, as signifying *That by which a Thing is what it is*: For, in That Sense, the *Attributes* of God do constitute his *Essence*; and *Solidity* or *Impenetrability* is the *Essence* of *Matter*. But *Essence* is all along to be understood as signifying here the same with *Substance*.

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To which I answer: 'Tis plain we know not the Essences of Things by Intuition; but can only reason about them from what we know of their different Properties or Attributes. Now, from the demonstrable Attributes of God, and from the known Properties of Matter, we have as unanswerable Reasons to convince and satisfy us that their Essences are intirely different, though we know not distinctly what those Essences are, as our Faculties can afford us, in judging of any the certainest Things whatsoever. For Instance, The demonstrable Attributes of God, are, that He is Self-Existent, Independent, Eternal, Infinite, Unchangeable, Incorruptible, Intelligent, Free, All-Powerful, Wise, Just, and Good: The known Properties of Matter, are, that it is not Necessary or Self-Existent, but Dependent, Finite, (nay, that it fills but a few very small and inconsiderable Portions of Space) that it is Divisible, Passive, Unintelligent, and consequently incapable of any Active Powers. Now nothing can be more certain and evident, than that the Substances to which these incompatible Attributes or Properties belong, or the Essences from which they flow, are intirely different one from the other; though we do not distinctly know what the inmost Substances or Essences Themselves are. If any Man will think a mere Hypothesis (the Cartesian or any other) concerning the inmost Nature of Substances to be a more satisfactory Discovery of the different Essences of Things, than we can attain by reasoning thus from their demonstrable Properties, and will chuse rather to draw fond Consequences from such Hypotheses and Fictions, founded upon no Proof at all, than to make Use of such Philosophy as is grounded only upon clear Reason or good Experiments, I know no Help for it, but he must be permitted to enjoy his Opinion quietly.

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The rest of the Book is All either an indecent and unreasonable Reviling of the learned Mr. Locke; from whom I neither cited any one Passage, nor (that I know of) borrowed any Argument from him; And therefore is altogether Impertinent. Or else it consists of gross Misrepresentations of my Sense, and very unfair Constructions and false Citations of my Words; Of which I shall presently give some Instances.

The first 8 and the 35th and 36th Pages of the Remarks are spent in attempting to prove, that, if we do not first know what the Essence of God, and what the Essence of Matter is, (that is, if the Cartesian Hypothesis or Fiction concerning the Essences of Spiritual and Material Substance be not granted to be true) there is no Way left by which it can be proved, at all, that the Essence of God and Matter is not one and the same. To which I have already given an Answer, viz. That, from the demonstrable Attributes of God, and from the known Properties of Matter, (being incompatible with each other) we have as absolute Certainty of their Essences and Substances being different, though we do not distinctly know what those Essences are, as our Faculties enable us to attain in any Metaphysical Question. For incompatible Properties can no more possibly be in any unknown, than in any known Subject.

*Page 12. The Author of the Remarks asserts, that Des-Cartes and his Followers have Mathematically proved, that the Essence of Matter consists in Length, Breadth, and Depth. And, upon this confident Assertion, his whole Book depends in every Part. To this therefore I answer, that That Hypothesis is really so far from being Mathematically proved to be True, that, on the contrary, He cannot but know (if he knows any Thing of these Matters) that the greatest Mathematicians in the present Age,
Men*

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Men confessedly greater in that Science, than any that ever lived before them, have clearly proved (as I before said) that it is + absolutely False. And not to take the least Notice of This throughout his whole Book, argues either great Insincerity, or great Ignorance.

+ See
Sir Isaac
Newton's
Principia,
pages 383
& 311.

I had affirmed, that to Imagine an Eternal and Infinite Nothing was being reduced to the Necessity of Imagining a Contradiction or Impossibility. For this, he argues against me, (Remark. page 14) as if I had asserted, that it was possible to imagine an Eternal and Infinite Nothing; whereas I asserted, that it was impossible and an express Contradiction so to do. This is great Insincerity.

I had charged the Cartesians with being unavoidably reduced to the Absurdity of making Matter a Necessarily-Existing Being. In citing this Passage, (Remark. pages 14 and 15) he ridiculously represents me as saying, that this Absurdity consisted in making Extension Necessary; though he knew, that in That very Passage, I supposed Matter and Extension to be intirely different Things. This likewise is great Insincerity.

I had said, that the Idea of Immensity was an Idea that no way belonged to Matter. Instead of this, he cites me asserting senselessly, (Remark. page 15) that Extension no way belongs to Matter. As if that which is not Immense or Infinite, is therefore not extended at all. This is the greatest Disingenuity in the World.

Remark. page 15. *He says; I am sure this Author cannot produce One, no not One Cartesian, that ever made Matter a Necessarily-Existing Being; that ever contradicted himself in Words, upon this Subject; that ever was mightily, or not mightily,*

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or at all perplexed with what *Mr. Clarke* calls his Argument; nay, that ever heard of that Thing he calls his Argument. Why are they thus misrepresented and imposed upon? *To this I answer: It had been sufficient to make good my Charge, to have shewn, that from the Cartesian Hypothesis it followed by unavoidable Consequence, that Matter must be a Necessarily-Existing Being; though the Cartesians themselves had not seen that Consequence. Yet I cited moreover a Passage out of Regis; wherein, 'tis plain, He perceived and owned that Consequence. But because the Remarker seems not satisfied with this, and pretends to triumph here with great Pleasure and Assurance; I will for once comply with his Challenge, and produce him Another, and That an unexceptionable Cartesian, namely, Des-Cartes himself, who Was greatly perplexed with the Argument I mentioned, and was unavoidably reduced to make Matter a Necessarily-Existing Being, and at the same Time did contradict himself in Words upon this Subject. It was Ob-*

* *Quæro an a Deo fieri potuisset, ut mundus esset finitus. Epist. ad Cartesium 68, Partis primæ.*

Nondum illud possum con-
coquere, eam esse inter res
corporeas connexionem, ut
nec mundum Deus creare po-
tuerit nisi infinitum, nec ul-
lum corpus in nihilum redi-
gere, quin eo ipso teneatur
aliud paris quantitatis stratim
creare. *Epist. 5. Partis secundæ.*

† *Puto implicare Contradic-
tionem ut Mundus sit finitus.
Cartes. Epist. 69. Partis pri-
mæ.*

Mihi autem non videtur de
ulla unquam re esse dicen-

* if Extension and Matter were
the same Thing, it seemed to them
to follow, that God could neither
possibly make the World finite,
nor annihilate any Part of Matter,
without creating at the same Time
just as much more to supply its
Place. *To this He answers:*
† that, according to his Hypo-
thesis, it does indeed imply a *Con-
tradiction* to suppose the World
to be *Finite*, or to suppose God
annihilating any Part of Matter;
but yet he will not say God can-
not do it, or that God cannot cause
that Two and Three shall not
make Five, or any other Contra-
diction

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diction whatsoever. *Is not this making Matter a Neceffarily-Ex-
 isting Being, to own, that 'tis a
 Contradiction to suppose God an-
 nibilating it, or setting Bounds to
 it? Is not this contradicting him-
 self, for a Man to affirm, (as Cartes
 does in all his Writings) that the
 World was Created by God, and
 Depends upon him, and yet at the
 same Time to declare, that it implies
 as plain a Contradiction to suppose any Part of Matter
 annihilable by the Power of God, as to suppose that
 Two and Three should not make Five? Is not this really
 a Ridiculing of the Power of God? And was not Des-
 Cartes therefore greatly perplexed with the Argu-
 ment I mentioned? And is not an Hypothesis, from
 which such Consequences unavoidably and confessedly
 follow, a fine Land-Mark of Distinction between
 Spiritual and Material Substances? And whatever op-
 poses this Hypothesis, a * depriving us of the Means * Remark
 of proving the Existence of the one only true God. page 25.*

dum, ipsam a Deo
 posse. Cum enim
 tio Veri & Boni ab ejus
 potentia dependeat; ne qui-
 dem dicere ausim, Deum fa-
 cere non posse ut Mons sit
 sine Valle, vel ut Unum &
 Duo non sint tria; sed tan-
 tum dico, talia implicare con-
 traditionem in meo conceptu.
 Quod idem etiam de Spatio,
 quod sit plane vacuum, &c.
 Epist. 6. Partis secundæ.

The Remarker humbly desires his Reader (page
 16) to be persuaded, that he is of no particular
 Sect in Matters of Philosophy, but only of the
 Party of Truth where-ever he meets with it.

The same Man had declared before, (page 12) that
 he believed Des-Cartes had Mathematically proved
 his Hypothesis; and takes not the least Notice of its
 having since been fully confuted by Mathematicians
 confessedly far more eminent in that Science, than Des-
 Cartes was. This is a very singular Mark of Im-
 partiality, and of being addicted to no Party in Matters
 of Philosophy.

Speaking of the Cartesian Argument drawn from
 the Idea of God, I had used these Words: Our first

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Certainty of the Existence of God arises not from this; that, *in the Idea* we frame of him in our own Minds, or rather *in the Definition* that we make of the Word [God,] as signifying a Being of all possible Perfections, we include Self-Existence: But, &c. *Meaning, that, according to That Argument, Self-Existence was rather made only a Part of the Definition of the Word, than proved to be a real Attribute of the Being itself. Instead of this, the Remarker, (pages 17 and 19) by a childish Misunderstanding of the Syntax of the Sentence, and referring the Particle [or] to a wrong Member of the Period, cites my Words in a quite different Manner; as if I had said, In the Idea we frame of God in our own Minds, or rather in the Idea we frame of Him in the Definition that we make of the Word, &c. And he is very facetious (pages 17 and 19) in ridiculing this Framing of an Idea in a Definition; which he calls, as it truly is, a Real Piece of Nonsense. But when, upon the Review, he finds himself the true and only Author of it, for Want of understanding Grammar; I suppose it will make him more modest and careful.*

He accuses me (Remark. pages 18, 20, &c.) of not understanding the Cartesian Argument drawn from the Idea of God. I confess myself very ready to submit to this Charge; and I can shew him much more learned Writers than either of Us, who have likewise † not understood that Argument. If He does understand it, he will do the World a very acceptable Piece of Service to make it out.

† See Cudworth's System, page 721, &c.

What he says in his 21st, 22d, 23d, and 24th Pages, is such a Heap of Misconstructions, and so intirely void of Sense, that I confess I cannot at all tell what he means.

From

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From my using the Word Mere Matter, he concludes (page 29) that I imagine there is another Sort of Matter, which is not a mere, bare, pure incogitative Matter; and that These Terms necessarily import this Sense. Whereas, in every one of the Places he cites, 'tis as exprefs and evident as Words can make it, that by Mere Matter I understand the Matter of which the World consists, not as opposed to Another Sort of Matter; but either as opposed to Motion and to the Form of the World, or as considered by itself and without the Government and Direction of a Supreme Intelligent Mind. This therefore is the highest Degree of Insincerity.

He charges me (pages 4, and 29, and 30,) with making a Translation quite different from Spinoza's Sense and Words. How I could mistranslate what I did not translate at all, I understand not: But whether I have misrepresented Spinoza's Sense, or no, (as I think I have not,) This I can only leave to the learned World to judge.

I reduced Spinoza's Opinion to this; That the Material World, and every Part of it, with the Order and Manner of Being of each Part, is the only Self-Existing or Necessarily-Existing Being.

*And this I think is as clearly contained in the * Words I cited from him, as any Thing can be. Here the Remarker asserts (page 30) that Spinoza never taught this Doctrine, nay, that he taught the quite contrary. To prove which, he cites a Passage, where Spinoza affirms, that † All who have in any Degree considered the Divine Nature, deny that God is Corporeal. Now this also is extremely*

* Præter Deum nulla dari neq; concipi potest substantia. Spinoz. Ethic. Par. I. Prop. 14.

Una substantia non potest produci ab alia substantia. Prop. 6.

Res nullo alio modo neq; alio ordine a Deo produci potuerunt, quam productæ sunt. Prop. 33.

Ad naturam substantiæ pertinet existere. Prop. 7.

† Omnes qui naturam divinam aliquo modo contemplati sunt, Deum esse Corporeum negant. Ethic. Par. I, Prop. 15. Schol.

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Insincere. For had this Author cited here the whole Sentence of Spinoza, as he had cited it before in his 26th Page; it would have appeared evidently, that Spinoza, by denying God to be Corporeal, meant only fallaciously to deny his being any particular Piece of

* *Per Corpus intelligimus quameunque quantitatem, longam, latam, & profundam, certa aliqua figura terminatam; quo nihil absurdius de Deo, ente scilicet absolute infinito, dici potest. Ibid.*

† *Substantiam Corpoream, quæ non nisi infinita concipi potest, nulla ratione natura divina indignum esse dici potest.*

‡ *Schol. ad Prop. 15. Part I. Whole of that very ‡ Scholium, from whence the Remarker has with the greatest Insincerity taken the present Objection. But besides: Suppose Spinoza had not explained himself in this Place, and had in this single Passage contradicted what he had plainly taught throughout the rest of his Book; would this have been any just Reason to say, that Spinoza never taught the Doctrine I imputed to him? nay, that he taught the quite contrary?*

*He charges me (page 32) with arguing only against the Accessories of Atheism, and leaving the Essential Hypothesis in its full Force; nay, with confirming and establishing (page 11) Spinoza's Atheism. It seems, in the Opinion of this Author, that proving the Material World to be, not a Necessary but a Dependent Being, made, preserved and governed, by a Self-Existent, Independent, Eternal, Infinite Mind, of perfect Knowledge, Wisdom, Power, Justice, Goodness and Truth; is arguing only against the Accessories of Atheism; And that the Essential Hypothesis of Atheism is left untouched, nay confirmed and established, by all who will not presume to define the Essence of
that*

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that Supreme Mind according to the Unintelligible Language of the Schools, and the groundless Imagination of Des-Cartes concerning the Substance or Essence of Matter and Spirit. I confess it appears to me, on the contrary, that the Essence of Atheism lies in making God either an Unintelligent Being [such as is the Material World,] or at least a Necessary Agent [such as Spinoza makes his One Substance to be,] void of all Freedom, Wisdom, Power and Goodness; and that Other Metaphysical Disputes are only about the Accessories: And that there is much more Ground, on the other Side, to suspect That very Hypothesis, of which this Writer is so fond, to be favourable to the Atheists main Purpose. For if, from Des-Cartes's Notion of the Essence of Matter, it follows (as he himself, in the Places now cited, confesses in express Words) that it implies a Contradiction to suppose the Material World Finite, or to suppose any Part of Matter can be annihilated by the Power of God; I appeal to this Author, whether This does not naturally tend to make Men think Matter a Necessary and Self-Existent Being.

*He charges me (page 33) with falsely accusing Spinoza of making God a mere Necessary Agent; and cites a Passage or two out of Spinoza, wherein that Author seems to assert the contrary. The Words which I cited from Spinoza, do as clearly express what I charged him with, as 'tis possible for any Thing to be expressed. For he asserts plainly, that * from the Power of God All Things proceed Necessarily; that All Things are determined by the Necessity of the Divine Nature; that whatever is in the Power of God, must Necessarily Exist; that Things could not have been produced by God in any*

* A summa Dei potentia Omnia necessario effluxisse.

Omnia ex Necessitate Divinae Naturae determinata sunt, &c.

Quicquid concipimus in Dei potestate esse, id necessario est.

Res nullo alio modo, neque alio ordine, a Deo produci potuerunt, quam productae sunt.

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operari ex libertate

other Manner or Order, than they Now are; and that God does not Act by a Liberty of Will. All this the Remarker very insincerely passes over, without the least Notice. And the Words which he cites out of Spinoza, do not at all prove the contrary to what

* Sequitur, solum Deum esse causam liberam.

Deus ex solis suæ naturæ legibus, & a nemine coactus agit.

I asserted. For when Spinoza says, that * God alone is a Free Cause; and that God acts by the Laws of his own Nature, without being forced by Any: 'Tis evident, he does not there mean a Freedom of Will; but only fallaciously signifies, that the Necessity by which all Things Exist in the Manner they do, is an inward Necessity in the Nature of the Things themselves, in Opposition to any Force put upon them from without: Which External Force, 'tis plain indeed that [the τὸ πᾶν] the whole Universe (the God of Spinoza) cannot be subject to; because it is supposed to contain All Things, within itself. But besides: Supposing (as I said before) that Spinoza had directly contradicted himself in this one Passage; how would That have proved my Charge against him to have been false?

He says (page 34) that I am guilty myself of what I groundlessly imputed to Spinoza; viz. of making God a mere Necessary Agent: Namely, by affirming that there is a Necessary Difference betwixt Good and Evil, and that there is such a Thing as Fitness and Unfitness, Eternally, Necessarily, and Unchangeably, in the Nature and Reason of Things, antecedently to Will and to all Positive or Arbitrary Appointment whatsoever. This, he says, is a groundless and positive Assertion; and plainly imports the Eternal Necessary Co-Existence of all Things, as much as Spinoza's Hypothesis does. Is not this an admirable Consequence? Because I affirm the Proportions

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tions of Things, and the Differences of Good and Evil, to be Eternal and Necessary; that therefore I affirm the Existence of the Things themselves to be also Eternal and Necessary? Because I affirm the Proportion, suppose between a Sphere and a Cylinder to be Eternal and Necessary; that therefore I affirm the Existence of Material Spheres and Cylinders to be likewise Eternal and Necessary? Because I affirm the Difference between Virtue and Vice to be Eternal and Necessary; that therefore I affirm Men, who practise Virtue or Vice, to have Existed Eternally? This Accusation shews both extreme Ignorance, and great Malice, in the Author of the Remarks.

I had used these Words, (Demonstrat. page 9) How an Eternal Duration can now be actually Past, is a Thing utterly as impossible for our narrow Understandings to comprehend, as any Thing, that Is not an express Contradiction, can be imagined to be; And yet to deny the Truth of the Proposition, that an Eternal Duration is now actually past, is to assert something still far more unintelligible, even a real and express Contradiction. Instead of this, the Remarker (page 39) citing my Words, with extreme Disingenuity leaves out one half of the Sentence, and makes me to say absolutely, that something is still far more unintelligible than that which is utterly impossible to be understood. Such gross Misrepresentations as these, in leaving out one Part of a Sentence, to make the rest Nonsense; can very hardly proceed, but from Want of Honesty.

Lastly, (page 41) he says that in my Sermons there is not one Argument offered, to prove against Spinoza, that God is a Spirit. I persuaded myself, that the proving God to be a Being absolutely distinct from the Material World, Self-Existent, Intelligent, Free, All-

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All-powerful, *Wise, and Good*; had been proving him to be a Spirit. But it seems, no Proof is of any Force with this Author, if it be not agreeable to the Cartesian Philosophy, in which alone he seems to have any Knowledge. To this therefore, I am not obliged to trouble either myself or the Reader, with giving any further Answer.



A DISCOURSE



A
DISCOURSE
Concerning the
Unalterable Obligations
OF
NATURAL RELIGION,
AND THE
Truth *and* Certainty
OF THE
Christian Revelation.

AVING in a former Discourse endeavoured to lay firmly the first Foundations of Religion, in the Certainty of the Existence and of the Attributes of God ; by proving severally and distinctly :

That Something *must needs have Existed from Eternity* : And how great soever the Difficulties are, which perplex the Conceptions and Apprehensions we attempt to frame of an *Eternal Duration* ; yet they

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they neither ought nor can raise in any Man's Mind any Doubt or Scruple concerning the Truth of the Assertion itself, that *Something has really been Eternal.*

That there must have Existed from Eternity *Some One Unchangeable and Independent Being*; because to suppose an eternal Succession of merely dependent Beings, proceeding one from another in an endless Progression without any original Independent Cause at all, is supposing Things that have in their own Nature no Necessity of Existing, to be *from Eternity* caused or produced by nothing; which is the very same Absurdity and express Contradiction, as to suppose them produced by Nothing at *any determinate Time.*

That That Unchangeable and Independent Being, which has Existed from Eternity, without any External Cause of its Existence; must be *Self-Existent*, that is, *Necessarily-Existing.*

That it must of Necessity be *Infinite* or everywhere present; a Being most *Simple, Uniform, Invariable, Indivisible, Incorruptible*, and infinitely removed from all such Imperfections, as are the known Qualities and inseparable Properties of the *Material World.*

That it must of Necessity be but *One*; because to suppose Two, or more, different Self-Existent independent Principles, may be reduced to a direct Contradiction.

That it must Necessarily be an *Intelligent Being.*

That it must be a *Free and Voluntary*, not a *Necessary Agent.*

That this Being must of Necessity have *Infinite Power*; and that in this Attribute is included, particularly, a Possibility of creating or producing Things, and also a Possibility of communicating to Creatures the *Power of Beginning Motion*, and a Possibility of enduing them with *Liberty or Freedom*

of

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of Will; which Freedom of Will is *not inconsistent* with any of the *Divine Attributes*.

That He must of Necessity be infinitely *Wise*.

And lastly, *That* He must Necessarily be a Being of infinite *Goodness, Justice, and Truth*, and all other moral Perfections; such as become the Supreme Governor and Judge of the World.

It remains now, in order to complete my Design of proving and establishing the Truth and Excellency of the whole Superstructure of our most Holy Religion; that I proceed, upon this Foundation of the Certainty of the *Being and Attributes of God*, to demonstrate in the next Place the *Unalterable Obligations of Natural Religion*, and the Certainty of *Divine Revelation*; in Opposition to the vain Arguings of certain vicious and profane Men, who, merely upon Account of their Incredulity, would be thought to be strict Adherers to Reason, and sincere and diligent Inquirers into Truth; when indeed on the contrary there is but too much Cause to fear, that they are not at all sincerely and really desirous to be satisfied in the true State of Things, but only seek, under the Pretence and Cover of Infidelity, to excuse their Vices and Debaucheries; which they are so strongly inflamed to, that they cannot prevail with themselves upon any Account to forsake them: And yet a rational Submitting to such Truths, as just Evidence and unanswerable Reason would induce them to believe, must necessarily make them uneasy under those Vices, and Self-condemned in the Practice of them. It remains therefore (I say) in order to finish the Design I proposed to myself, of establishing the Truth and Excellency of our Holy Religion, in Opposition to all such vain Pretenders to Reason as these; that I proceed at this Time, by a Continuation of the same Method of Arguing, by which I before demonstrated

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monstrated the Being and Attributes of God, to prove distinctly the following Propositions.

I. *That* the same Necessary and Eternal *different Relations*, that different Things bear one to another; and the same consequent *Fitness or Unfitness* of the Application of different Things or different Relations one to another, with regard to which the Will of God always and Necessarily *does* determine itself to chuse to act only what is agreeable to Justice, Equity, Goodness and Truth, in order to the Welfare of the whole Universe; *ought* likewise constantly to determine the Wills of all subordinate rational Beings, to govern all their Actions by the same Rules, for the Good of the Public in their respective Stations. That is; these Eternal and Necessary Differences of Things make it *fit and reasonable* for Creatures so to act; they cause it to be their *Duty*, or lay an *Obligation* upon them, so to do; even separate from the Consideration of these Rules being the *positive Will or Command of God*; and also antecedent to any Respect or Regard, Expectation or Apprehension, of any *particular, private and personal Advantage or Disadvantage, Reward or Punishment*, either present or future, annexed either by natural Consequence, or by positive Appointments, to the practising or neglecting those Rules.

II. *That* though these eternal moral Obligations are indeed of themselves incumbent on all rational Beings, even antecedent to the Consideration of their being the positive Will and Command of God; yet That which most strongly confirms, and in Practice most effectually and indispensably enforces them upon us, is this; that both from the Nature of Things, and the Perfections of God, and from several other collateral Considerations, it appears, that, as God is himself Necessarily Just and Good in the Exercise of his Infinite Power in the Government of the whole World, so he cannot but likewise

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likewise positively *Require* that all his rational Creatures should in their Proportion be so too, in the Exercise of each of their Powers in their respective Spheres. That is ; As these eternal moral Obligations are really in perpetual Force merely from their own Nature and the abstract Reason of Things ; so also they are moreover the express and unalterable *Will, Command, and Law of God* to his Creatures, which he cannot but expect should in Obedience to his Supreme Authority, as well as in Compliance with the Natural Reason of Things, be regularly and constantly observed through the whole Creation.

III. *That* therefore, though these eternal moral Obligations are also incumbent indeed on all rational Creatures, antecedent to any Respect of Particular Reward or Punishment ; yet they *must* certainly and necessarily be attended with *Rewards and Punishments*. Because the same Reasons, which prove God himself to be Necessarily Just and Good ; and the Rules of Justice, Equity and Goodness, to be his unalterable Will, Law and Command, to all Created Beings ; prove also that he cannot but *be pleased with* and *approve* such Creatures as imitate and obey him by observing those Rules, and *be displeased* with such as act contrary thereto ; and consequently that he cannot but some Way or other make a *suitable Difference* in his Dealings with them ; and manifest his Supreme Power and absolute Authority, in finally supporting, maintaining, and vindicating effectually the Honour of these his Divine Laws ; as becomes the Just and Righteous Governor and Disposer of all Things.

IV. *That* consequently, though in order to establish this suitable Difference between the Fruits or Effects of Virtue and Vice, so reasonable in itself, and so absolutely necessary for the Vindication of the Honour of God ; the Nature of Things, and
the

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he Constitution and Order of God's Creation, was originally such, that the Observance of the eternal Rules of Justice, Equity and Goodness, does indeed of itself tend by direct and natural Consequence to make all Creatures happy ; and the contrary Practice, to make them miserable : Yet since through some great and general Corruption and Depravation, (whencesoever *That* may have arisen ; the particular Original whereof could hardly have been known *Now* without Revelation ;) since, I say, the Condition of Men in this present State is such, that the natural Order of Things in this World is in event manifestly perverted, and Virtue and Goodness are visibly prevented in great Measure from obtaining their proper and due Effects in establishing Mens Happiness proportionable to their Behaviour and Practice ; therefore 'tis absolutely impossible, that the whole View and Intention, the original and the final Design, of God's creating such rational Beings as Men are, and placing them in this Globe of Earth, as the Chief and Principal, or indeed (may we not say) the only Inhabitants, for whose Sake alone This Part at least of the Creation is manifestly fitted up and accommodated ; 'tis absolutely impossible (I say) that the Whole of God's Design in all this should be nothing more, than to keep up Eternally a Succession of such short-lived Generations of Men as at present Are ; and those in such a corrupt, confused, and disorderly State of Things, as we see the World is now in ; without any due Observation of the Eternal Rules of Good and Evil, without any clear and remarkable Effect of the great and most necessary Differences of Things, and without any final Vindication of the Honour and Laws of God in the proportionable Reward of the best, or Punishment of the worst of Men. And consequently 'tis certain and necessary, (even as certain as the moral Attributes

butes of God before demonstrated) that, instead of continuing an eternal Succession of new Generations in the present Form and State of Things, there must at some Time or other be such a Revolution and Renovation of Things, such a *future State* of Existence of the same Persons, as that, by an exact Distribution of Rewards and Punishments therein, all the present Disorders and Inequalities may be set right; and that the whole Scheme of Providence, which to us, who judge of it by only one small Portion of it, seems now so inexplicable and much confused; may appear, at its Consummation, to be a Design worthy of Infinite Wisdom, Justice, and Goodness.

V. *That*, though the indispensable Necessity of all the great and moral Obligations of Natural Religion, and also the Certainty of a future State of Rewards and Punishments, be thus in general deducible even demonstrably, by a Chain of clear and undeniable Reasoning: Yet (in the present State of the World, by what Means soever it came originally to be so corrupted, of which more hereafter) such is the *Carelessness, Inconsiderateness, and Want of Attention* of the greater Part of Mankind; so many the *Prejudices and false Notions* imbibed by evil Education; so strong and violent the unreasonable *Lusts, Appetites and Desires* of Sense; and so great the *Blindness*, introduced by *superstitious Opinions, vicious Customs, and debauched Practices* through the World; that very Few are able, in Reality and Effect, to discover these Things clearly and plainly for themselves; but Men have great need of particular *Teaching* and much *Instruction*, to convince them of the *Truth, and Certainty, and Importance* of these Things; to give them a due *Sense*, and clear and just *Apprehensions* concerning them; and to bring them effectually to the *Practice* of the plainest and most necessary Duties.

VI. *That*, though in almost every Age there have indeed been in the Heathen World some

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wise and brave and good Men, who have made it their Business to study and practise these Things themselves, and to teach and exhort others to do the like ; who seem therefore to have been raised up by Providence, as Instruments to reprove, in some Measure, and put some Kind of Check to the extreme Superstition and Wickedness of the Nations wherein they lived : Yet none of these have ever been able to reform the World with any considerably great and universal Success ; Because they have been but very *few* that have in earnest set themselves about this excellent Work ; and they, that have indeed sincerely done it, have themselves been intirely *ignorant* of some Doctrines, and very *doubtful and uncertain* of others, absolutely necessary for the bringing about that great End ; and those Things, which they have been certain of, and in good Measure understood, they have not been able *to prove and explain clearly* enough ; and those that they have been able both to prove and explain by sufficiently clear Reasoning, they have not yet had *Authority* enough to inforce and inculcate upon Men's Minds with so strong an Impression, as to influence and govern the general Practice of the World.

VII. *That* therefore there was plainly wanting a *Divine Revelation*, to recover Mankind out of their universally degenerate Estate, into a State suitable to the original Excellency of their Nature : Which Divine Revelation, both the Necessities of Men, and their natural Notions of God, gave them reasonable Ground to expect and hope for ; As appears from the Acknowledgements which the best and wisest of the Heathen Philosophers themselves have made, of their *Sense* of the Necessity and Want of such a Revelation ; and from their Expressions of the Hopes they had entertained, that God would some Time or other vouchsafe it unto them.

VIII. *That*

VIII. *That* there is *no other Religion* now in the World but the Christian, that has any just Pretence, or tolerable Appearance of Reason, to be esteemed such a Divine Revelation : And therefore, if Christianity be not true, there is no Revelation of the Will of God at all made to Mankind.

IX. *That* the *Christian Religion*, considered in its primitive Simplicity, and as taught in the Holy Scriptures, has all the Marks and Proofs of its being actually and truly a Divine Revelation, that Any Divine Revelation, supposing it was true, could reasonably be imagined or desired to have.

X. *That* the *Practical Duties*, which the Christian Religion enjoins, are all such, as are most agreeable to our natural Notions of God, and most perfective of the Nature, and conducive to the Happiness and Well-being of Men : That is ; Christianity, even in this single Respect, as containing alone, and in one consistent System, All the Wise and good Precepts, (and those improved, augmented, and exalted to the highest Degree of Perfection) that ever were taught singly and scatteredly, and many Times but very corruptly by the several Schools of the Philosophers ; and this without any Mixture of the fond, absurd, and superstitious Practices of any of those Philosophers ; ought to be embraced and practised by all rational and considering Deists, who will act consistently, and steddily pursue the Consequences of their own Principles ; as at least the best Scheme and Sect of Philosophy that ever was set up in the World ; and highly probable, even though it had no external Evidence to be of Divine Original.

XI. *That* the *Motives*, by which the Christian Religion inforces the Practice of these Duties, are such as are most suitable to the excellent Wisdom of God, and most answerable to the natural Expectations of Men.

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XII. *That* the peculiar *Manner and Circumstances* with which it enjoins these Duties, and urges these Motives, are exactly consonant to the Dictates of sound Reason, or the unprejudiced Light of Nature; and most wisely perfective of it.

XIII. *That* all the [*Credenda*, or] *Doctrines*, which the true, simple, and uncorrupted Christian Religion teaches; (that is, not only those *plain* Doctrines, which it requires to be believed as Fundamental and of Necessity to eternal Salvation, but even *All* the Doctrines which it teaches as Matters of Truth;) are, though indeed many of them not discoverable by bare Reason unassisted with Revelation, yet, when discovered by Revelation, apparently most *agreeable* to sound unprejudiced Reason; have every one of them a natural *Tendency*, and a direct and powerful *Influence*, to *reform* Men's Lives and *correct* their Manners; and do *together* make up an infinitely more *consistent and rational Scheme* of Belief, than any that the wisest of the antient Philosophers ever *did*, or the cunningest of modern Unbelievers *can* invent or contrive.

XIV. *That* as this Revelation, to the Judgment of Right and Sober Reason, appears even of itself highly credible and probable; and abundantly recommends itself in its native Simplicity, merely by its own intrinsic Goodness and Excellency, to the Practice of the most rational and considering Men, who are desirous in all their Actions to have Satisfaction and Comfort and good Hope within themselves, from the Conscience of what they do: So it is moreover positively and directly proved to be actually and immediately sent to us from God, *by* the many infallible *Signs and Miracles*, which the Author of it worked publicly as the Evidence of his Divine Commission; *by* the exact Completion both of the *Prophecies* that went before concerning him, and of those that He himself delivered concerning

cerning Things that were to happen after ; and *by* the *Testimony* of his Followers ; Which in all its Circumstances was the most credible, certain, and convincing Evidence that was ever given to any Matter of Fact in the World.

XV. And Lastly ; *That* they who will not, by such Arguments and Proofs as these, be convinced of the Truth and Certainty of the Christian Religion, and be persuaded to make it the Rule and Guide of all their Actions ; *would not be convinced*, (so far as to influence their Hearts, and reform their Lives) by *any other Evidence* whatsoever ; no, not though one should rise on purpose from the Dead, to endeavour to convince them,

I might here, before I enter upon the particular *Of the several Sorts* Proof of these several Propositions, justly be allowed to premise, that having *Now* to deal with *another of Deists.* Sort of Men, than those against whom my former Discourse was directed ; and being consequently in some Parts of this Treatise to make Use of some *other Kinds* of Arguments than those which the Nature of that Discourse permitted and required ; the same *demonstrative* Force of reasoning, and even *Mathematical* Certainty, which in the main Argument was there easy to be obtained, ought not here to be expected ; but that such *moral* Evidence, or mixt Proofs from Circumstances and Testimony, as most Matters of Fact are only capable of, and wise and honest Men are always satisfied with, ought to be accounted sufficient in the present Case. Because all the Principles indeed upon which *Atheists* attempt to build *their* Schemes, are such as may by plain Force of Reason, and undeniably demonstrative Argumentations, be reduced to express and direct Contradictions. But the *Deists* pretend to own all the Principles of Reason, and would be thought to deny nothing but what depends entirely

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on Testimony and Evidence of Matter of Fact, which they think they can easily evade.

But, if we examine Things to the Bottom, we shall find that the Matter does not in reality lie here. For I believe there are in the World, at least in any Part of the World where the Christian Religion is in any tolerable Purity professed, very *Few*, if *Any*, such Deists as will truly stand to all the Principles of unprejudiced Reason, and sincerely both in Profession and Practice own all the Obligations of Natural Religion, and yet oppose Christianity merely upon Account of their not being satisfied with the Strength of the Evidence of *Matter of Fact*. A constant and sincere Observance of all the Laws of Reason, and Obligations of Natural Religion, will unavoidably lead a Man to *Christianity*; if he has due Opportunities of examining Things, and will steddily pursue the Consequences of his own Principles. And all Others, who pretend to be Deists without coming up to this, can have no fixed and settled Principles at all, upon which they can either argue or act consistently; but must of Necessity sink into *downwright Atheism*, (and consequently fall under the Force of the former Arguments;) as may appear by considering the *several Sorts* of them.

*Of the first
sort of De-
ists. And
of Provi-
dence.*

I. Some Men would be thought to be *Deists*, because they pretend to believe the Existence of an Eternal, Infinite, Independent, Intelligent Being; and, to avoid the *Name* of Epicurean Atheists, teach also that this Supreme Being made the World: Though at the same Time they agree with the Epicureans in this, that they fancy *

* Omnis enim per se Divum
natura necesse est
Immortali ævo summa cum
pace fruatur,
Semota a nostris rebus, se-
junctaq; longe.

God does *not at all* concern him-
self in the *Government* of the
World, nor has any regard, to, or
care of, what is done therein. But,
if we examine Things duly, this
Opinion

Opinion must unavoidably terminate in *absolute Atheism*. For although to imagine that God at the Creation of the World, or at the Formation of any particular Part of it, could (if he had pleased) by his infinite Wisdom, Foresight, and unerring Design, have originally so ordered, disposed, and adapted all the Springs and Series of future *necessary and unintelligent* Causes, that, without the immediate Interposition of his Almighty Power upon every particular Occasion, they should regularly, by Virtue of that original Disposition, have produced Effects worthy to proceed from the Direction and Government of infinite Wisdom: Though this, I say, may possibly by very nice and abstract Reasoning be reconcileable with a firm Belief both of the Being and Attributes of God, and also with a consistent Notion even of *Providence* itself; yet to fancy that God originally created a *certain Quantity of Matter and Motion*, and left them to frame a World at Adventures, without any determinate and particular View, Design, or Direction; this can no Way be defended consistently, but must of Necessity recur to *downright Atheism*: As I shall shew presently; after I have made only this One Observation, that as That Opinion is impious in itself, so the late Improvements in Mathematicks and natural Philosophy have discovered, that, as Things Now are, That Scheme is plainly false and impossible in Fact. For, not to say, that, seeing Matter is utterly incapable of obeying any Laws, the very original Laws of Motion themselves cannot continue to take Place, but by something Superior to Mat-

Nam privata de
privata periculis,
Ipsa suis pollens opibus, n
indiga nostri,
Nec bene promeritis capitur,
nec tangitur ira.

Lucret. Lib. 1.

Τὸ μακάριον καὶ ἀφθαρτον,
ἔτε αὐτὸ πρᾶγματα ἔχει, ἔτε
ἄλλω παρέχει ὥστε ἔτε ὀργαῖς,
ἔτε χάρισι συνέχειαι. Laert.
in vita Epicuri.

Nor is the Doctrine of those Modern Philosophers much different; who ascribe every Thing to Matter and Motion, exclusive of Final Causes; and speak of God as an Intelligencia Supramundana: Which is the very Cant of Epicurus and Lucretius.

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er, continually exerting on it a certain Force or Power according to such certain and determinate Laws; 'tis now evident beyond Question, that the Bodies of all *Plants* and *Animals*, much the most considerable Parts of the World, could not possibly have been formed by mere Matter according to any general Laws of Motion. And not only so; but That most universal Principle of *Gravitation* itself, the Spring of almost all the great and regular inanimate Motions in the World, answering (as I hinted in my former Discourse) not at all to the *Surfaces* of Bodies, (by which alone they can act one upon another) but entirely to their *Solid Content*; cannot possibly be the Result of any Motion originally impressed on Matter, but must of Necessity be caused (either *immediately* or *mediately*) by something which penetrates the very Solid Substance of all Bodies, and continually puts forth in them a Force or Power entirely different from that by which Matter acts on Matter. Which is, by the Way, an evident Demonstration, not only of the World's being *made originally* by a Supreme Intelligent Cause; but moreover that it depends every Moment on some Superior Being, for the *Preservation* of its Frame; and that all the great Motions in it are caused by *some* Immaterial Power, not having *originally* impressed a *certain Quantity of Motion* upon Matter, but *perpetually and actually* exerting itself every Moment in every Part of the World. Which *Preserving and Governing Power*, whether it be *immediately* the Power and Action of the same Supreme Cause that created the World, of Him *without whom not a Sparrow falls to the Ground, and with whom the very Hairs of our Head are all numbered*; or whether it be the Action of some subordinate *Instruments* appointed by Him to direct and preside respectively over certain Parts thereof; does either Way equally give us a very noble Idea of *Providence*.
Those

and Revealed RELIGION.

Those Men indeed, who, merely through a certain Vanity of Philosophizing, have been tempted to embrace that other Opinion, of all Things being produced and continued only by a *certain Quantity of Motion, originally* impressed on *Matter* without any determinate Design or Direction, and left to itself to form a World at Adventures; Those Men, I say, who, merely through a Vanity of Philosophizing, have been tempted to embrace that Opinion, without attending whither it would lead them; ought not, indeed, to be directly charged with all the *Consequences* of it. But 'tis certain, that Many, under that Cover, have really been Atheists; and the *Opinion itself* (as I before said) leads, *necessarily* and by unavoidable Consequence, to *plain Atheism*. For if God be an All-powerful, Omnipresent, Intelligent, Wise and Free Being, (as it hath been before demonstrated that he necessarily Is;) he cannot possibly but *know*, at all Times and in all Places, every Thing that *is*; and *foreknow* what at all Times and in all Places 'tis fittest and wisest *should be*; and have perfect *Power*, without the least Labour, Difficulty or Opposition, to *order and bring to pass* what he so judges fit to be accomplished: And consequently 'tis impossible but * he must actually direct and appoint every particular Thing and Circumstance that is in the World, or ever shall be, excepting only what by his own Pleasure he puts under the Power and Choice of subordinate Free Agents. If therefore God does not concern himself in the Government of the World, nor has any Regard to what is done therein; it will follow that he is not an Omnipresent, All-powerful, Intelligent, and Wise Being; and consequently, that he Is not at all. Wherefore the Opinion of this Sort of Deists stands not upon any certain consistent Principles, but leads unavoidably

* Quo confesso, confitendum est Eorum consilio mundum administrari. *Cic. de Nat. Deor. Lib. 2.*

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scilicet verbis reli-
que Deos, re sustulisse. Cic.
de Nat. Deor. Lib. 2.

Human

*Affairs not
beneath the
Regard of
Providence.*

† Εἰσὶ γὰρ τινες οἱ νομίζουσιν
εἶναι τὰ θεῖα, καὶ τοιαῦτα οἰά-
περ ὁ λόγος αὐτὰ ἐξέφηεν, α-
γαθὰ, καὶ δύναμιν ἔχοντα τὴν
ἀκροτάτην, καὶ γνῶσιν τὴν τε-
λειοτάτην τῶν μέντοι ἀνθρωπίνων
καταρροεῖν, ὡς μικρῶν καὶ ἐυέλων
ὄντων, καὶ ἀναξίων τῆς ἐαυτῶν
ἐπιμελείας. *Simplic. in Epictet.*

† Deorum providentia mun-
dus administratur; iidemque
consulunt rebus humanis; ne-
que solum universis, verum
etiam Singulis. Cic. *de Divinat.*
Lib. 1.

|| Ἄλλ' ἔθεν τάχ' ἂν ἴσως εἴη
χαλεπὸν ἐνδειξασθαι τῷ τόγῳ, ὡς
ἐπιμελεῖς σμικρῶν εἰσι θεοὶ, ἔκ
ἥττον ἢ τῶν μεγέθει διαφερόντων.
Plato de Leg. Lib. 10.

Εἰ δὲ εἴδοι τὸ κόσμον ὁ θεὸς
ἐπιμελεῖται, ἀνάγκη καὶ τῶν με-
ρῶν αὐτοῦ προνοεῖν; ὥσπερ καὶ
αἱ τέχναι ποιεῖσι. Καὶ γὰρ
ἰατρὸς τοῦ ὅλου σώματος ἐπιμελη-
θῆναι προδεδεμένος, ἔκ ἂν ἀμε-
λήσειε τῶν μερῶν· ἔδε στρατηγός,
ἔδ' οἰκονόμος, ἢ πολιτικός ἀνὴρ·
τῶν γὰρ μερῶν ἀμελεμένων, ἀ-
νάγκη χειρόνως τὸ ὅλον διαλίσσεσθαι.
Simplic. in Epictet.

unavoidably to downright *Atheism*;
And, * however in *Words* they
may confess a God, yet in *Reality*
and in *Truth* they deny him.

If, to avoid this, they will own God's Govern-
ment and Providence over the *greater and more*
considerable Parts of the World, but deny his In-
spection and Regard to *human Affairs here upon*
Earth, as being † too *minute and*
small for the Supreme Governor
of all Things to concern himself in;
This still amounts to the same.
For if God be Omnipresent, All-
knowing, and All-powerful; he
cannot but equally know, and with
equal Ease be able to direct and go-
vern, ‡ *all* Things as *any*, and the
|| *minutest* Things as the *greatest*.
So that if he has no Regard nor
Concern for these Things; his At-
tributes must, as before, be deni-
ed; and consequently his Being.
But besides: *Human Affairs* are by
no means the minutest and most
inconsiderable Part of the Creation.
For, (not to consider, Now, *That*
Excellency of Human Nature,
which *Christianity* discovers to us;) let a Deist suppose the *Universe*
as large as the widest Hypothesis
of Astronomy will give him leave
to imagine; or let him suppose it
as immense as he himself pleases,
and filled with as great Numbers
of rational Creatures as his own

Fancy can suggest; Yet the *System* wherein *we* are
placed, will, at least for aught he can reasonably
suppose, be as considerable as any other single
System;

and Revealed RELIGION.

System; And the *Earth* whereon we dwell, as considerable as most of the other *Planets* in this *System*; And *Mankind* manifestly the only considerable Inhabitants on this *Globe* of *Earth*. *Man* therefore has manifestly a better Claim to the particular Regard and Concern of Providence, than any Thing else in this *Globe* of ours; And *this our Globe* of *Earth*, as just a Pretence to it, as most other *Planets* in the *System*; And *this System*, as just an one, as far as we can judge, as any *System* in the Universe. If therefore there be any Providence at all, and God has any Concern for any Part of the World; *Mankind*, even separate from the Consideration of that Excellency of Human Nature which the Christian Doctrine discovers to us, may as reasonably be supposed to be under its particular Care and Government, as any other Part of the Universe.

2. Some others there are, that call themselves *Deists*, because they believe, not only the Being, but also the Providence of God; that is, that every *natural* Thing that is done in the World, is produc'd by the Power, appointed by the Wisdom, and directed by the Government of God; Though, not allowing any Difference between *moral Good* and *Evil*, they suppose that God takes no Notice of the *morally good or evil* Actions of Men; these Things depending, as they imagine, merely on the arbitrary Constitution of Human Laws. But how handsomly soever These Men may seem to speak, of the *natural Attributes* of God, of his Knowledge, Wisdom, and Power; yet neither can This Opinion be settled on any certain Principles, nor defended by any consistent Reasoning; nor can the *natural Attributes* of God be so separated from the *moral*, but that He who denies the latter, may be reduced to a Necessity of denying the former likewise. For since (as I have formerly proved) there cannot but be

Of the second Sort of Deists.

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the eternal and necessary Differences of different Things one from another ; and from these necessary Differences of Things there cannot but arise a Fitness or Unfitness of the Application of different Things or different Relations one to another ; and infinite Knowledge can no more fail to Know, or infinite Wisdom to Choose, or infinite Power to Act according to these eternal Reasons and Proportions of Things, than Knowledge can be Ignorance, Wisdom be Folly, or Power Weakness ; and consequently the Justice and Goodness of God are as certain and necessary, as his Wisdom and Power : It follows unavoidably, that he who denies the Justice or Goodness of God, or, which is all one, denies his Exercise of these Attributes in inspecting and regarding the moral Actions of Men ; must also deny, either his Wisdom, or his Power, or both ; and consequently must needs be driven into *absolute Atheism*. For though, in *some* moral Matters, Men are not indeed to be judged of by the *Consequences* of their Opinions, but by their Profession and Practice ;

* Quasi ego id curem, quid ille aiat aut neget : Illud quaero, quid ei consentaneum sit dicere, qui, &c. Cic. de Finib. Lib. 2.

yet in the present Case it * matters not at all what Men affirm, or how honourably they may seem to speak of some particular Attributes of God ; but what, notwithstanding such Profession, must needs in all Reason be supposed to be their true Opinion ; and their *Practice* generally appears answerable to it.

Profane and debauched Deists not capable of being argued with.

For, concerning *these two* Sorts of Deists, 'tis observable, that as their Opinions can terminate consistently in nothing but *downright Atheism* ; so their *Practice and Behaviour* is generally agreeable to that of the most openly professed *Atheists*. They not only oppose the *Revelation* of Christianity, and reject all the *moral* Obligations of *Natural Religion*, as such ; but generally they despise also the Wisdom of all *Human Constitutions* made for the Order and Benefit of Mankind,

and Revealed RELIGION.

Mankind, and are as much Contemners of *common* Decency as they are of *Religion*. They endeavour to ridicule and banter all *Human* as well as *Divine* Accomplishments; all Virtue and Government of a Man's self, all Learning and Knowledge, all Wisdom and Honour, and every Thing for which a *Man* can justly be commended or be esteemed more excellent than a *Beast*. They pretend commonly, in their Discourse and Writings, to expose the Abuses and Corruptions of Religion; but (as is too manifest in some of their modern Books, as well as in their Talk,) they aim really against all Virtue in general, and all good Manners, and against whatsoever is truly valuable and commendable in Men. They pretend to ridicule certain Vices and Follies of ignorant or superstitious Men; But the many very profane and very lewd Images, with which they industriously affect to dress up their Discourse, shew plainly that they really do not so much intend to expose and deride any Vice or Folly, as on the contrary to foment and please the debauched and vicious Inclinations of Others as void of Shame as Themselves. They discover clearly, that they have no Sense at all of the Dignity of Humane Nature, nor of the Superiority and Excellency of their Reason above even the meanest of the Brutes. They will sometimes in Words seem to magnify the Wisdom, and other natural Attributes of God; but in reality, by ridiculing whatever bears any Resemblance to it in Men, they shew undeniably that they do not indeed believe there is any real Difference in Things, or any true Excellency in one Thing more than in another. By turning every Thing alike, and without Exception, into Ridicule and Mockery; they declare plainly, that they don't believe any Thing to be wise, any Thing decent, any Thing comely or praise-worthy at all. They seem not to have any Esteem or Value, for those distinguishing Powers and Faculties; by induing them wherewith,
God

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God has taught them more than the Beasts of the Field, and made them wiser than the Fowls of Heaven. In a Word : Whatsoever Things are true, whatsoever Things are honest, whatsoever Things are just, whatsoever Things are pure, whatsoever Things are lovely, whatsoever Things are of good Report; if there be any Virtue, if there be any Praise; these Things they make the constant Subject of their Mockery and Abuse, Ridicule and Raillery. On the contrary; whatsoever Things are profane, impure, filthy, dishonourable and absurd; these Things they make it their Business to represent as harmless and indifferent, and to laugh Men out of their natural Shame and Abhorrence of them; nay, even to recommend them with their utmost Wit. Such Men as these are not to be argued with, till they can be persuaded to use *Arguments* instead of *Drolery*. For *Banter* is not capable of being answered by *Reason*: Not because it has any Strength in it; but because it runs out of all the Bounds of Reason and good Sense, by extravagantly joining together such Images, as have not in themselves any Manner of Similitude or Connexion; by which Means all Things are alike easy to be rendered ridiculous, by being represented only in an absurd Dress. These Men therefore are first to be convinced of the true Principles of *Reason*, before they can be disputed with; and then they must of Necessity either retreat into downright *Atheism*, or be led by undeniable Reasoning to acknowledge and submit to the Obligations of *Morality*, and heartily repent of their profane Abuse of God and Religion.

Of the
third sort
of Deists.

3. Another Sort of *Deists* there are; who having right Apprehensions concerning the *natural Attributes* of God, and his All-governing Providence; seem also to have some Notion of his *moral Perfections* also. That is; as they believe him to be a Being infinitely Knowing, Powerful, and Wise; so they believe him to be also in some Sense a Being of infinite Justice;

and Revealed RELIGION.

Justice, Goodness, and Truth; and that he governs the Universe by these Perfections, and expects suitable Obedience from all his rational Creatures. But then, having a Prejudice against the Notion of the *Immortality of Human Souls*, they believe that Men perish intirely at Death, and that one Generation shall perpetually succeed another, without any Thing remaining of Men after their Departure out of this Life, and without any future Restoration or Renovation of Things. And imagining that Justice and Goodness in God are not the same as in the Ideas we frame of these Perfections when we consider them in Men, or when we reason about them abstractly in themselves; but that in the Supreme Governor of the World they are something *Transcendent*, and of which we cannot make any true Judgment, nor argue with any Certainty about them: They fancy, though there does not indeed seem to Us to be any Equity or Proportion in the Distribution of Rewards and Punishments in this present Life, yet, that We are not sufficient Judges concerning the Attributes of God, to argue from thence with any Assurance for the Certainty of a future State. But neither does This Opinion stand on any consistent Principles. For if Justice and Goodness be not * the same in God, as in our Ideas; then we mean nothing, when we say that God is necessarily Just and Good: And for the same Reason it may as well be said, that we know not what we mean, when we affirm that he is an Intelligent and Wise Being; And there will be no Foundation at all left, on which we can fix any Thing. Thus the *moral Attributes* of God, however they be acknowledged in Words, yet in Reality they are by these Men intirely taken away; and, upon the same Grounds, the *natural Attributes* may also be denied. And so,
upon

* Καθ' ἡμᾶς γὰρ ἡ αὐτὴ ἀρετὴ ἐστὶ τῶν μακαρίων πάντων ὥστε καὶ ἡ αὐτὴ ἀρετὴ ἀνθρώπου καὶ Θεοῦ. Orig. contr. Cels. Lib. 4.

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Upon the Whole, This Opinion likewise, if we argue upon it consistently, must finally recur to absolute Atheism.

*Of the
fourth Sort
of Deists.*

4. The last Sort of *Deists* are those, who, if they did indeed believe what they *pretend*, have just and right Notions of God, and of all the Divine Attributes in every Respect: Who declare they believe, *that* there is One, Eternal, Infinite, Intelligent, All-powerful, and Wise Being; the Creator, Preserver, and Governor of all Things: *That* this Supreme Cause is a Being of infinite Justice, Goodness, and Truth, and all other moral as well as natural Perfections: *That* he made the World for the Manifestation of his Power and Wisdom, and to communicate his Goodness and Happiness to his Creatures: *That* he preserves it by his continual All-wise Providence, and governs it according to the Eternal Rules of infinite Justice, Equity, Goodness, Mercy, and Truth: *That* all created rational Beings, depending continually upon him, are bound to adore, worship, and obey him; to praise him for all Things they enjoy, and to pray to him for every Thing they want: *That* they are All obliged to promote, in their Proportion, and according to the Extent of their several Powers and Abilities, the general Good and Welfare of those Parts of the World wherein they are placed; in like Manner as the Divine Goodness is continually promoting the universal Benefit of the Whole: *That* Men in particular are every one obliged to make it their Business, by an universal Benevolence, to promote the Happiness of all others: *That*, in order to this, every Man is bound always to behave himself so towards Others, as in Reason he would desire they should, in like Circumstances, deal with Him: *That* therefore he is obliged to obey and submit to his Superiors in all just and right Things for the Preservation of Society, and the Peace and Benefit of the Publick; to be just and honest, equitable

table and sincere, in all his Dealings with his Equals, for the keeping inviolable the everlasting Rule of Righteousness, and maintaining an universal Trust and Confidence, Friendship and Affection amongst Men; and, towards his Inferiors, to be gentle and kind, easy and affable, charitable and willing to assist as many as stand in need of his Help, for the Preservation of universal Love and Benevolence amongst Mankind, and in Imitation of the Goodness of God, who preserves and does Good to all Creatures, which depend intirely upon Him for their very Being, and all that they enjoy: *That*, in Respect of Himself, every Man is bound to preserve, as much as in him lies, his own Being, and the right Use of all his Faculties, so long as it shall please God, who appointed him his Station in this World, to continue him therein: *That* therefore he is bound to have an exact Government of his Passions, and carefully to abstain from all Debaucheries and Abuses of himself, which tend either to the Destruction of his own Being, or to the Disordering of his Faculties, and disabling him from performing his Duty, or hurrying him into the Practice of unreasonable and unjust Things: Lastly, *That*, accordingly as Men regard or neglect these Obligations, so they are proportionably acceptable or displeasing unto God; who, being Supreme Governor of the World, cannot but testify his Favour or Displeasure at some Time or other; and, consequently, since this is not done in the present State, therefore there must be a future State of Rewards and Punishments in a Life to come. But All this, the Men we are now speaking of, *pretend to believe* only so far as 'tis discoverable by the Light of Nature alone, without believing any Divine Revelation. These, I say, are the only *True Deists*; and, indeed, the only Persons who ought in Reason to be argued with, in order to convince them of the Reasonableness, Truth, and

M Certainty

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Certainty of the *Christian Revelation*. But alas!
12. there is, as I * before said, too much Reason to believe, that there are very few or none *such Deists* as these among modern Deniers of Revelation. For such Men as I have now described, if they would at all attend to the Consequences of their own Principles, could not fail of being quickly persuaded to embrace *Christianity*. For, being fully convinced of the *Obligations of Natural Religion*, and the Certainty of a *future State of Rewards or Punishments*; and yet observing, at the same Time, how little Use Men generally are able to make of the Light of Reason to discover the *one*, or to convince themselves effectually of the Certainty and Importance of the *other*; 'tis impossible but they must be sensible of the Want of a Revelation; 'tis impossible but they must earnestly desire God would be pleased, by some direct Discovery of his Will, to make these Things more *clear* and *plain*, more *easy* and *obvious*, more *certain* and *evident*, to all Capacities; 'tis impossible but they must wish God would be pleased particularly to signify expressly the Acceptableness of Repentance, and his Willingness to forgive returning Sinners; 'tis impossible but they must be very solicitous to have some more particular and certain Information concerning the Nature of that future State, which Reason teaches them in general to expect. The Consequence of this is, that they must needs be possessed before-hand with a strong Hope, that the Christian Revelation may, upon due Examination, appear to be true. They must be infinitely far from ridiculing and despising any Thing that claims to be a Divine Revelation, before they have sincerely and thoroughly examined it to the Bottom. They must needs be before-hand very much disposed in its Favour; and be very willing to be convinced, that, what tends to the Advancing and Perfecting the Obligations of Natural Religion, to the Securing their
great

great Hopes, and Ascertaining the Truth of a future State of Rewards and Punishments ; and can any Way be made appear to be worthy of God, and consistent with his Attributes ; and has Any reasonable Proof of the Matters of Fact it depends upon ; is really and truly, what it pretends to be, a *Divine Revelation*. And now, is it possible that any Man, with these Opinions and these Dispositions, should continue to reject *Christianity*, when proposed to him in its original and genuine Simplicity, without the Mixture of any Corruptions or Inventions of Men ? Let him read the Sermons and Exhortations of our Saviour, as delivered in the *Gospels* ; and the Discourses of the Apostles, preserved in their *Acts* and their *Epistles* ; and try if he can withstand the Evidence of such a Doctrine, and reject the Hopes of such a glorious Immortality so discovered to him.

The *Heathen Philosophers*, those few of them, who taught and lived up to the Obligations of Natural Religion, had indeed a consistent Scheme of Deism so far as it went ; and they were very Brave and Wise Men, if any of them could keep steady and firm to it. *That there is now no consistent Scheme of Deism in the World.*

But the Case is not so *Now*. The same Scheme of Deism is not any longer consistent with its own Principles, if it does not *now* lead Men to embrace and believe *Revelation*, as it *Then* taught them to hope for it. *Deists*, in Our Days, who obstinately reject Revelation when offered to them, are not such Men as *Socrates* and *Tully* were ; but, under Pretence of Deism, it is plain, they are generally Ridiculers of all that is truly excellent even in Natural Religion itself. Could we see a Deist, whose Mind was heartily possessed with worthy and just Apprehensions of all the Attributes of God, and a deep Sense of his Duty towards that Supreme Author and Preserver of his Being : Could we see a Deist, who lived in an exact Performance of all the Duties of Natural Religion ; and by the Practice of Righteous-

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ness, Justice, Equity, Sobriety, and Temperance, expressed, in his Actions as well as Words, a firm Belief and Expectation of a future State of Rewards and Punishments. In a Word, could we see a Deist, who, with Reverence and Modesty, with Sincerity and Impartiality, with a true and hearty Desire of finding out and submitting to Reason and Truth, would inquire into the Foundations of our Belief, and examine thoroughly the Pretensions which pure and uncorrupt Christianity has to be received as a Divine Revelation; I think we could not doubt to affirm of such a Person, as our Saviour did of the young Man in the Gospel, that he was *not far from the Kingdom of God*; and that, being *willing to do his Will, he should know of the Doctrine, whether it was of God*. But, as I have said, there is great Reason to doubt, there are no such Deists as these among the Infidels of Our Days. This, indeed, is what they sometimes pretend, and seem to desire should be thought to be their Case. But alas! their trivial and vain Cavils; their Mocking and Ridiculing without and before Examination; their directing the whole Strefs of their Objections against particular Customs, or particular and perhaps uncertain Opinions, or Explications of Opinions, without at all considering the main Body of Religion; their loose, vain, and frothy Discourses; and, above all, their vicious and immoral Lives; shew plainly and undeniably, that they are not really *Deists*, but mere *Atheists*; and consequently not capable to judge of the Truth of Christianity. If they were truly and in earnest such *Deists* as they pretend and would sometimes be thought to be, those Principles (as has been already shewn in Part, and will more fully appear in the following Discourse) would unavoidably lead them to *Christianity*. But, being such as they really are, they cannot possibly avoid recurring to downright *Atheism*.

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The Sum is this. There is now * no such Thing, as a consistent Scheme of Deism. That which alone was once such, namely, the Scheme of the best *Heathen Philosophers*, ceases now to be so, after the Appearance of Revelation: Because (as I have already shewn, and shall more largely prove in the Sequel of this Discourse) it directly conducts Men to the Belief of *Christianity*. All other Pretences to *Deism* may, by unavoidable Consequence, be forced to terminate in absolute *Atheism*. He that cannot prevail with himself to obey the *Christian Doctrine*, and embrace those Hopes of *Life and Immortality*, which our Saviour has brought to Light through the Gospel; cannot Now be imagined to maintain, with any Firmness, Steadiness, and Certainty, the Belief of the *Immortality of the Soul*, and a future State of Rewards and Punishments after Death; Because all the main Difficulties and Objections lie equally against *Both*. For the same Reason, he who disbelieves the Immortality of the Soul, and a future State of Rewards and Punishments; cannot defend, to any effectual Purpose, or inforce with any sufficient Strength, the *Obligations of Morality and Natural Religion*; notwithstanding that they are indeed incumbent upon Men, from the very Nature and Reason of the Things themselves. Then; he who gives up the Obligations of Morality and Natural Religion, cannot possibly have any just and worthy Notion of the *moral Attributes* of God, or any true Sense of the Nature and necessary Differences of Things. And he that once goes thus far, has no Foundation left, upon which he can be sure of the *natural Attributes*, or even of the *Existence* of God: Because to deny what unavoidably follows from the Supposition of his Existence and natural Attributes, is in Reality denying those natural Attributes, and that

* Ita fit, ut si a
rum *Summa*, quam
comprehendimus, aberraveris,
omnis ratio intereat, & ad
nihilum omnia revertantur.
Lactant. Lib. 7.

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Existence itself. On the contrary: He who believes the *Being and natural Attributes* of God, must of Necessity (as has been shewn in my former Discourse) confess his *moral Attributes* also. Next; he who owns and has just Notions of the *moral Attributes* of God, cannot avoid acknowledging the *Obligations of Morality and Natural Religion*. In like Manner; he who owns the *Obligations of Morality and Natural Religion*, must needs, to support those *Obligations*, and make them effectual in Practice, believe a *future State of Rewards and Punishments*. And finally; he who believes both the *Obligations of Natural Religion*, and the Certainty of a future State of Rewards and Punishments; has no Manner of Reason left, why he should reject the *Christian Revelation*, when proposed to him in its original and genuine Simplicity. Wherefore since those Arguments which demonstrate to us the *Being and Attributes* of God, are so closely connected with those which prove the Reasonableness and Certainty of the *Christian Revelation*, that there is Now no consistent Scheme of Deism left; all modern Deists being forced to shift from one Cavil to another, and having no fixed and certain Set of Principles to adhere to: I thought I could no Way better prevent their ill Designs, and obviate all their different Shifts and Objections, than, by endeavouring, in the same Method of Reasoning by which I before demonstrated the *Being and Attributes* of God, to prove in like Manner, by one direct and continued Thread of Arguing, the Reasonableness and Certainty of the *Christian Revelation* also.

To proceed therefore to the Proof of the *Propositions* themselves.

I. *The same necessary and eternal different Relations, that different Things bear one to another; and the same consequent Fitness or Unfitness of the Application of different*

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different Things or different Relations one to another with Regard to which, the Will of God always and necessarily does determine itself, to chuse to act only what is agreeable to Justice, Equity, Goodness and Truth, in order to the Welfare of the whole Universe; ought likewise constantly to determine the Wills of all subordinate rational Beings, to govern all Their Actions by the same Rules, for the Good of the Publick, in their respective Stations. That is; these eternal and necessary Differences of Things make it fit and reasonable for Creatures so to act; they cause it to be their Duty, or lay an Obligation upon them, so to do; even separate from the Consideration of these Rules being the positive Will or Command of God; and also antecedent to any Respect or Regard, Expectation or Apprehension, of any particular private and personal Advantage or Disadvantage, Reward or Punishment, either present or future; annexed either by natural Consequence, or by positive Appointment, to the Practising or Neglecting of those Rules.

The several Parts of this Proposition may be proved distinctly, in the following Manner.

1. That there are *Differences* of Things; and *different Relations, Respects or Proportions*, of some things towards others; is as evident and undeniable, as that one *Magnitude* or *Number* is greater, equal to, or smaller than another. That, from these *different Relations* of different Things, there necessarily arises an *Agreement* or *Disagreement* of some Things with others, or a *Fitness* or *Unfitness* of the Application of different Things or different Relations one to another; is likewise as plain, as that there is any such Thing as *Proportion* or *Disproportion* in Geometry and *Arithmetick*, or *Uniformity* or *Difformity* in comparing together the respective *Figures* of *Bodies*. Further, that there is a *Fitness* or *Suitableness* of certain *Circumstances* to certain *Persons*, and an *Unsuitableness* of others; founded in the Nature of

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Things and the *Qualifications of Persons*, antecedent to all *positive* Appointment whatsoever : Also that, from the different Relations of *different Persons one to another*, there necessarily arises a Fitness or Unfitness of certain *Manners of Behaviour* of some Persons towards others : Is as manifest, as that the Properties which flow from the Essences of different *mathematical Figures*, have different *Congruities or Incongruities* between themselves ; or that, in *Mechanics*, certain *Weights or Powers* have very different *Forces*, and different Effects one upon Another, according to their different *Distances*, or different *Positions and Situations* in respect of each other. For *Instance*: That *God* is infinitely superior to *Men* ; is as clear, as that *Infinity* is larger than a *Point*, or *Eternity* longer than a *Moment*. And 'tis as certainly *Fit*, that Men should honour and worship, obey and imitate God, rather than on the contrary in all their Actions endeavour to dishonour and disobey him ; as 'tis certainly *True*, that *they* have an intire Dependence on *Him*, and *He* on the contrary can in no Respect receive any Advantage from *Them* ; and not only so, but also that his Will is as certainly and unalterably *just* and *equitable* in giving his Commands, as his Power is *irresistible* in requiring Submission to it. Again ; 'tis a Thing absolutely and necessarily *Fitter* in itself, that the Supreme Author and Creator of the Universe should govern, order, and direct all Things to certain constant and *regular Ends* ; than that every Thing should be permitted to go on at Adventures, and produce uncertain Effects merely *by Chance*, and in the utmost *Confusion*, without any determinate View or Design at all. 'Tis a Thing manifestly *Fitter* in itself, that the All-powerful Governor of the World should do always what is *Best* in the Whole, and what tends most to the universal *Good* of the whole Creation ; than that he should make the Whole continually *miserable* ; or that, to satisfy
the

the unreasonable Desires of any particular depraved Natures, he should at any Time suffer the Order of the Whole to be *altered* and *perverted*. Lastly, 'tis a Thing evidently and infinitely more *Fit*, that any one particular *innocent and good Being* should, by the Supreme Ruler and Disposer of all Things, be placed and preserved in an *easy and happy Estate*; than that, without any Fault or Demerit of its own, it should be made *extremely, remedilessly, and endlessly miserable*. In like Manner; in *Men's* Dealing and Conversing one with another; 'tis undeniably more *Fit*, absolutely and in the Nature of the Thing itself, that all Men should endeavour to promote the *universal Good and Welfare of All*; than that all Men should be continually contriving the *Ruin and Destruction of All*. 'Tis evidently more *Fit*, even *before* all positive Bargains and Compacts, that Men should deal one with another according to the known Rules of *Justice and Equity*; than that every Man, for his own present Advantage, should without Scruple disappoint the most *reasonable and equitable Expectations* of his Neighbours, and *cheat and defraud*, or *spoil by Violence*, all others without Restraint. Lastly, 'tis without Dispute more *Fit* and Reasonable in itself, that I should *preserve the Life* of an innocent Man, that happens at any Time to be in my Power; or deliver him from any imminent Danger, tho' I have never made any Promise so to do; than that I should suffer him to perish, or *take away his Life*, without any Reason or Provocation at all.

These Things are so notoriously plain and self-evident, that nothing but the extremest Stupidity of Mind, Corruption of Manners, or Perverseness of Spirit, can possibly make any Man entertain the least Doubt concerning them. For a Man endued with Reason, to deny the Truth of these Things; is the very same Thing, as if a Man that has the Use of his *Sight*, should at the same Time that he beholds the *Sun*, deny that there is any such Thing as *Light* in

The absurdity of those who deny the eternal and necessary Differences of Things.

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the World ; or as if a Man that understands *Geometry* or *Arithmethick*, should deny the most obvious and known *Proportions* of *Lines* or *Numbers*, and perversely contend that the *Whole* is not equal to all its *Parts*, or that a *Square* is not double to a *Triangle* of equal Base and Height. Any Man of ordinary Capacity, and unbyassed Judgment, Plainness and Simplicity ; who had never read, and had never been told, that there were Men and Philosophers, who had in earnest asserted and attempted to prove, that there is no natural and unalterable Difference between *Good* and *Evil* ; would at the first Hearing be as hardly persuaded to believe, that it could ever really enter into the Heart of any Intelligent Man, to deny all natural Difference between *Right* and *Wrong* ; as he would be to believe, that ever there could be any *Geometer* who would seriously and in good Earnest lay it down as a first Principle, that a *crooked Line* is as *Straight* as a *Right* one. So that indeed it might justly seem altogether a needless Undertaking, to attempt to prove and establish the *eternal Difference* of *Good* and *Evil* ; had there not appeared certain Men, as Mr. *Hobbs*, and some few others, who have presumed, contrary to the plainest and most obvious Reason of Mankind, to assert, and not without some Subtlety endeavoured to prove, that there is no such real Difference *originally, necessarily, and absolutely* in the Nature of Things ; but that all Obligation of *Duty to God* arises merely from his absolutely *irresistible Power* ; and all *Duty towards Men*, merely from *positive Compact* : And have founded their whole Scheme of Politicks upon that Opinion. Wherein as they have contradicted the Judgment of all the wisest and soberest Part of Mankind, so they have not been able to avoid contradicting themselves also. For (not to mention now, that they have no Way to shew how *Compacts* themselves come to be *Obligatory*, but by inconsistently owning an *eternal original Fitness* in the Thing itself, which

I shall

I shall have Occasion to observe hereafter : Beside
 This, I say,) if there be *naturally* and *absolutely*, in
 Things themselves, no Difference between *Good* and
Evil, *Just* and *Unjust* ; then in the State of Nature,
 before any Compact be made, 'tis equally as good,
 just, and reasonable, for one Man to destroy the
 Life of another, not only when 'tis necessary for
 his own Preservation, but also arbitrarily and with-
 out any * Provocation at all, or any Appearance of * See *Hobbs*
 Advantage to himself ; as to preserve or save ano- de Cive. c.
 ther Man's Life, when he may do it without any 3. §. 4.
 Hazard of his own. The Consequence of which
 is, that not only the first and most obvious Way
 for every particular Man to secure himself effectually,
 would be (as Mr. *Hobbs* teaches) to endeavour
 to prevent and cut off all others ; but also that Men
 might destroy one another upon every foolish and
 peevish or arbitrary Humour, even when they did
 not think any such Thing necessary for their own
 Preservation. And the Effect of this Practice must
 needs be, that it would terminate in the Destruction
 of all Mankind. Which being undeniably a great
 and unsufferable Evil, Mr. *Hobbs* himself confesses
 it reasonable, that, to prevent this Evil, Men should
 enter into certain Compacts to preserve one another.
 Now if the Destruction of Mankind by each other's
 Hands be such an Evil, that, to prevent it, it was
fit and *reasonable* that Men should enter into Com-
 pacts to preserve each other ; then, *before* any such
 Compacts, it was manifestly a Thing *unfit* and *un-*
reasonable in itself, that Mankind should all destroy
 one another. And, if so, then for the same Reason,
 it was also *unfit* and *unreasonable*, antecedent to all
 Compacts, that *any one Man* should destroy another
arbitrarily and without any Provocation, or at any
 Time when it was not *absolutely* and *immediately* ne-
 cessary for the Preservation of himself. Which is
 directly contradictory to Mr. *Hobbs*'s first Supposi-
 tion,

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quitur injuriam
posse, nisi ei quo-
mitur pactum. *De Cive*
c. 3. §. 4. where see more to
the same Purpose.

tion, of * there being no natural
and absolute Difference between
Good and Evil, Just and Unjust,
antecedent to positive Compact.

And in like Manner All others,
who upon any Pretence whatsoever, teach that Good
and Evil depend originally on the Constitution of
positive Laws, whether *Divine* or *Human*; must una-
voidably run into the same Absurdity. For if there
be no such Thing as Good and Evil in the Nature
of Things, antecedent to all Laws; then neither
can any one Law be better than another; nor any
one Thing whatever be more justly established,
and enforced by Laws, than the contrary; nor can

† Manifestum est *rationem*
nullam esse Lege prohibenti
noxas tales, nisi agnoscunt ta-
les Actus, etiam antecederent
ad ullam Legem, mala esse.
Cumberl. de Leg. Nat. pag. 194.

‡ Nam stoliditas inveniri
quæ inanior potest, quam *ma-*
la esse nulla contendere, &
tanquam malos perdere & *con-*
demnare peccantes? *Arnob.*
advers. Gentes. lib. 2.

† any Reason be given, why any
Laws should ever be made at all :
But all Laws, equally, will be
either ‡ arbitrary and tyrannical,
or frivolous and needless; because
the contrary might with equal
Reason have been established, if,
before the Making of the Laws,
all Things had been alike indiffe-
rent in their own Nature. There
is no possible Way to avoid this

Absurdity, but by saying, that, out of Things in
their own Nature absolutely indifferent, those are
chosen by wise Governors to be made obligatory
by Law, the Practice of which they judge will tend
to the public Benefit of the Community. But this
is an express Contradiction in the very Terms. For
if the Practice of certain Things tends to the public
Benefit of the World, and the contrary would tend
to the public Disadvantage; then those Things are
not in their own Nature indifferent, but were good
and reasonable to be practised before any Law was
made, and can only for that very Reason be wisely
enforced by the Authority of Laws. Only here it
is

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is to be observed, that by the public Benefit must * not be understood the Interest of any *one* particular *Nation*, to the plain Injury or Prejudice of the rest of Mankind; any more than the Interest of *one City* or *Family*, in Opposition to their Neighbours of the same Country: But those Things only are truly good in their own Nature, which either tend to the universal Benefit and Welfare of *all Men*, or at least are not destructive of it. The true State therefore of this Case is plainly this. Some Things are in their own nature *Good* and *Reasonable* and *Fit* to be done; such as *keeping Faith*, and *performing equitable Compacts*, and the like; And these receive not their obligatory Power, from any Law or Authority; but are only declared, confirmed, and enforced by Penalties, upon such as would not perhaps be governed by right Reason only. Other Things are in their own Nature *absolutely Evil*; such as *breaking Faith*, *refusing to perform equitable Compacts*, *cruelly destroying those who have neither directly nor indirectly given any Occasion for any such Treatment*, and the like; And these cannot, by any Law or Authority whatsoever, be made fit and reasonable, or excusable to be practised. Lastly, other Things are in their own Nature *Indifferent*; that is, (not *absolutely* and *strictly* so; as such trivial Actions, which have no Way any Tendency at all either to the public Welfare or Damage; For, concerning *such* Things, it would be childish and trifling to suppose any Laws to be made at all; But they are) such Things, whose Tendency to the public Benefit or Disadvantage is either so *small* or so *remote*, or so *obscure and involved*, that the Generality of People are not able of themselves to discern on which Side they ought to act: And these Things are made Obligatory by the Authority of Laws: Though

* Qui autem nem dicunt habendam, *norum* negant; dirimunt hi communem generis humani societatem; qua sublata, justitia funditus tollitur. *Cic. de Offic. lib. 3.*

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though perhaps every one cannot distinctly perceive the Reason and Fitness of their being enjoined: Of which Sort are many particular *penal Laws*, in several Countries and Nations. But to proceed.

The principal Thing that can, with any Colour of Reason, seem to countenance the Opinion of those who deny the natural and eternal Difference of Good and Evil; (for Mr. *Hobbs's* false Reasonings I shall hereafter consider by themselves;) is the *Difficulty* there may sometimes be to define exactly the Bounds of Right and Wrong; the

* Τα δὲ καλὰ καὶ τὰ δίκαια, περὶ ὧν ἡ πολιτικὴ σκοπεῖται, τοσαύτην ἔχει διαφορὰν καὶ πλάνην, ὥστε δοκεῖν νόμῳ εἶναι, φύσει δὲ μὴ. *Aristot. Ethic. lib. 1. cap. 1.*

Variety * of *Opinions*, that have obtained even among understanding and learned Men concerning certain Questions of Just and Unjust, especially in political Matters; and the *many contrary Laws*

that have been made in divers Ages and in different Countries, concerning these Matters. But as, in *Painting*, two very different Colours, by diluting each other very slowly and gradually, may from the highest Intensity in either Extreme, terminate in the Midst insensibly, and so run one into the other, that it shall not be possible even for a skilful Eye to determine exactly where the one ends, and the other begins; and yet the Colours may really differ as much as can be, not in Degree only, but entirely in Kind, as Red and Blue, or White and Black: So, though it may perhaps be very difficult in some nice and perplexed Cases (which yet are very far from occurring frequently) to define exactly the Bounds of Right and Wrong, Just and Unjust; and there may be some Latitude in the Judgment of different Men, and the Laws of divers Nations; yet *Right* and *Wrong* are nevertheless in themselves totally and essentially different; even altogether as much, as *White and Black, Light and Darkeness.*

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Darkness. The *Spartan Law* perhaps, which * permitted their Youth to *Steal*; may, as absurd as it was, bear much Dispute, whether it was absolutely *Unjust* or no; because, every Man having an absolute Right in his own Goods, it may seem that the Members of any Society may agree to transfer or alter their own Properties upon what Conditions they shall think fit. But if it could be supposed, that a Law had been made at *Sparta*; or at *Rome*, or in *India*, or in any other Part of the World; whereby it had been commanded or allowed, that every Man might Rob by *Violence*, and *Murder* whomsoever he met with; or that *no Faith* should be kept with any Man, nor any *equitable Compacts* performed; no Man, with any tolerable Use of his Reason, whatever Diversity of Judgment might be among them in other Matters, would have thought that such a Law could have authorised or excused, much less have justified such Actions, and have made them become good: Because 'tis plainly not in Men's Power to make *Falsehood* be *Truth*, though they may alter the *Property of their Goods* as they please. Now if, in *flagrant Cases*, the natural and essential Difference between Good and Evil, Right and Wrong, cannot but be confessed to be plainly and undeniably evident; the Difference between them must be also essential and unalterable in all, even the smallest and nicest and most intricate, Cases, though it be not so easy to be discerned and accurately distinguished. For if, from the Difficulty of determining exactly the Bounds of Right and Wrong in many *perplexed Cases*, it could truly be concluded, that Just and Unjust were not essentially different by Nature, but only by positive Constitution and Custom; it would follow equally, that they were not really, essentially, and unalterably different, even in the *most flagrant Cases*

* Κλέπειν νεόμιστο
 δέρας παίδας, ὃ, τι τις δύναται
Plutarch. Apophthegmata Laco-
nica.

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Things that can be supposed. Which is an Assertion so very absurd, that Mr. *Hobbs* himself could hardly vent it without blushing, and discovering plainly, by his shifting Expressions, his secret Self-condemnation. There *Are* therefore certain *necessary and eternal Differences* of Things; and certain consequent *Fitnesses* or *Unfitnesses* of the Application of different Things or different Relations one to another; not depending on any positive Constitutions, but founded unchangeably in the Nature and Reason of Things, and unavoidably arising from the Differences of the Things themselves. Which is the first Branch of the general Proposition I proposed to prove.

That the Will of God always determines itself to act according to the eternal reason of Things.

2. Now what these eternal and unalterable *Relations, Respects, or Proportions* of Things, with their consequent *Agreements or Disagreements, Fitnesses or Unfitnesses*, absolutely and necessarily *Are* in themselves; *That* also they *appear to be*, to the *Understandings* of all Intelligent Beings; except those only, who *understand* Things to be what they are not, that is, whose *Understandings* are either very imperfect, or very much depraved. And by this Understanding or Knowledge of the natural and necessary Relations, Fitnesses, and Proportions of Things, the *Wills* likewise of all Intelligent Beings are constantly directed, and must needs be determined to act accordingly; excepting those only, who *Will* Things to be what they are not and cannot be; that is, whose *Wills* are corrupted by particular Interest or Affection, or swayed by some unreasonable and prevailing Passion. Wherefore since the *natural* Attributes of God, his infinite Knowledge, Wisdom, and Power, set *Him* infinitely above all Possibility of being *deceived by any Error*, or of being *influenced by any wrong Affection*; 'tis manifest *His* Divine Will cannot but always and necessarily determine itself to chuse to Do what in the Whole is absolutely Best and Fittest to be done; that is, to act constantly according

according to the eternal Rules of infinite Goodness, Justice and Truth. As I have endeavoured to shew distinctly in my former Discourse in deducing severally the *Moral* Attributes of God.

3. And now, that the same *Reason of Things*, That all with Regard to which the Will of God always and necessarily *Does* determine itself to act in constant Conformity to the eternal Rules of Justice, Equity, Goodness and Truth, *ought* also constantly to determine the Wills of all Subordinate Rational Beings to govern all *Their* Actions by the same Rules, is very evident. For, as 'tis absolutely *impossible in Nature*, that God should be *deceived by any Error*, or *influenced by any wrong Affection*: So 'tis very *unreasonable and Blame-worthy in Practice*, that any *Intelligent* Creatures, whom God has made so far like unto himself, as to indue them with those excellent Faculties of *Reason* and *Will*, whereby they are enabled to *distinguish* Good from Evil, and to chuse the one, and refuse the other; should either *negligently* suffer themselves to *be imposed upon and deceived* in Matters of Good and Evil, Right and Wrong; or *wilfully and perversely* allow themselves to be overruled, by *absurd Passions* and *corrupt or partial Affections*, to act contrary to what they know is Fit to be done. Which two Things, *viz. negligent Misunderstanding*, or *wilful Passions and Lusts*, are, as I said, the only Causes which can make a reasonable Creature act contrary to Reason, that is, contrary to the eternal Rules of Justice, Equity, Righteousness and Truth. For, was it not for these inexcusable Corruptions and Depravations, 'tis impossible but the same Proportions and Fitneses of Things, which have so much Weight and so much Excellency and Beauty in them, that the All-powerful Creator and Governor of the Universe (who has the absolute and uncontroulable Dominion of all Things in his own Hands, and is accountable to none for what

*rational
Creatures
are obliged
to govern
themselves
in all their
Actions by
the same e-
ternal Rule
of Reason.*

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*Proved
from the
original
Nature of
Things.*

he does, yet) thinks it no Diminution of his Power to make this *Reason of Things* the unalterable Rule and Law of all his own Actions in the Government of the World, and does nothing by mere Will and Arbitrariness; 'tis impossible, (I say) if it was not for inexcusable Corruption and Depravation, but the same eternal *Reason of Things* must much more have Weight enough to determine constantly the Wills and Actions of all Subordinate, Finite, Dependent and Accountable Beings. For originally and in Reality, 'tis as *natural* and (morally speaking) *necessary*, that the *Will* should be determined in every Action by the *Reason of the Thing*, and the *Right of the Case*; as 'tis *natural* and (absolutely speaking) *necessary*, that the *Understanding* should submit to a *demonstrated Truth*. And 'tis as absurd and Blameworthy to *mistake negligently* plain *Right* and *Wrong*, that is, to *understand* the Proportions of Things in Morality to be what they are not; or *wilfully to act contrary* to known Justice and Equity, that is, to *will* Things to be what they are not and cannot be; as it would be absurd and ridiculous for a Man, in Arithmetical Matters, ignorantly to believe, that *Twice Two is not equal to Four*; or wilfully and obstinately to contend, against his own clear Knowledge, that *the Whole is not equal to all its Parts*. The only Difference is, that *Assent* to a plain speculative *Truth* is not in a Man's Power to withhold; but to *Act* according to the plain *Right* and *Reason* of Things, this he may, by the natural Liberty of his Will forbear. But the One he *ought* to do; and 'tis as much his plain and indispensable *Duty*; as the other he *cannot but do*, and 'tis the *Necessity* of his Nature to do it. He that wilfully refuses to *Honour and Obey God*, from whom he received his Being, and to whom he continually owes his Preservation, is really guilty of an equal Absurdity and Inconsistency in Practice, as he that in Speculation

tion denies the *Effect* to owe any Thing to its Cause, or the *Whole* to be bigger than its Part. He that refuses to deal with all Men equitably, and with every Man as he desires they should deal with him, is guilty of the very same Unreasonableness and Contradiction in one Case, as he that, in another Case, should affirm one Number or Quantity to be equal to another, and yet *That other*, at the same Time, not to be equal to the first. Lastly, he that acknowledges himself obliged to the Practice of certain Duties both towards God and towards Men, and yet takes no Care either to preserve his own Being, or at least not to preserve himself in such a State and Temper of Mind and Body, as may best enable him to perform those Duties, is altogether as inexcusable and ridiculous as he that, in any other Matter, should affirm one Thing at the same Time that he denies another, without which the former could not possibly be true; or undertake one Thing, at the same Time that he obstinately omits another, without which the former is by no Means practicable. Wherefore all rational Creatures, whose Wills are not constantly and regularly determined, and their Actions governed, by right Reason and the necessary Differences of Good and Evil, according to the eternal and invariable Rules of Justice, Equity, Goodness and Truth; but suffer themselves to be swayed by unaccountable arbitrary Humours, and rash Passions, by Lusts, Vanity and Pride; by private Interest, or present sensual Pleasures: These, setting up their own unreasonable Self-will in Opposition to the Nature and Reason of Things, endeavour (as much as in them lies) to make Things be what they are not, and cannot be. Which is the highest Presumption and greatest Insolence, as well as the greatest Absurdity, imaginable. 'Tis acting contrary to that Understanding, Reason and Judgment, which God has implanted in their Natures on Purpose to enable them to discern the Difference between Good and Evil. 'Tis attempting to destroy

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that Order, by which the Universe subsists. 'Tis offering the highest Affront imaginable to the Creator of all Things, who made Things to be what they are, and governs every Thing himself according to the Laws of their several Natures. In a Word ; All wilful Wickedness and Perversion of Right is the very same Insolence and Absurdity in *Moral Matters* ; as it would be in *Natural Things*. for a Man to pretend to alter the certain Proportions of Numbers, to take away the Demonstrable Relations and Properties of Mathematical Figures ; to make Light Darkness, and Darkness Light ; or to call Sweet Bitter, and Bitter Sweet.

And from the Sense, that all, even wicked Men, unavoidably have, of their being under such an Obligation.

Further ; As it appears thus from the *abstract and absolute* Reason and Nature of Things, that all rational Creatures *Ought*, that is, *are obliged* to take Care that their Wills and Actions be constantly determined and governed by the eternal Rule of Right and Equity : So the Certainty and Universality of *that Obligation* is plainly confirmed, and the Force of it particularly discovered and applied to every Man, by This ; that in like Manner as no one, who is instructed in Mathematics, can forbear giving his Assent to every Geometrical Demonstration, of which he understands the Terms, either by his own Study, or by having had them explained to him by Others ; so no Man, who either has Patience or Opportunities to examine and consider Things himself, or has the Means of being taught and instructed in any tolerable Manner by Others, concerning the necessary Relations and Dependencies of Things, can avoid giving his *Assent* to the Fitness and Reasonableness of his governing all his Actions by the Law or Rule before-mentioned, even though his *Practice*, through the Prevalence of brutish Lusts, be most absurdly contradictory to that *Assent*. That is to say ; by the Reason of his Mind, he cannot but be compelled to own and acknowledge, that there is really

really such an *Obligation* indispensably incumbent upon him; even at the same Time that in the *Actions of his Life* he is endeavouring to throw it off and despise it. For the Judgment and Conscience of a Man's own Mind, concerning the Reasonableness and Fitness of the Thing, that his Actions should be conformed to such or such a Rule or Law; is the truest and formallest *Obligation*; even more properly and strictly so, than any Opinion whatsoever of the Authority of the Giver of a Law, or any Regard he may have to its Sanction by Rewards and Punishments. For whoever acts contrary to this Sense and Conscience of his own Mind, is necessarily self-condemned; and the greatest and strongest of all *Obligations* is that which a Man cannot break through without condemning himself. The Dread of superior Power and Authority, and the Sanction of Rewards and Punishments; however indeed absolutely necessary to the Government of frail and fallible Creatures, and truly the most effectual Means of keeping Them in their Duty; is yet really in itself only a *secondary* and *additional* Obligation, or *Enforcement* of the first. The original *Obligation* of all (the ambiguous Use of which Word, as a *Term of Art*, has caused some Perplexity and Confusion in this Matter) is the eternal *Reason* of Things; *That Reason*, which God himself, who has no Superior to direct him, and to whose Happiness nothing can be added, nor any Thing diminished from it, yet constantly *obliges himself* to govern the World by: And the more excellent and perfect any Creatures are, the more chearfully and steddily are their Wills always determined by this *Supreme Obligation*, in Conformity to the Nature, and in Imitation of the most perfect Will of God. So far therefore as Men are conscious of what is right and wrong, so far they *Are* under an *Obligation* to act accordingly; And consequently That eternal Rule of Right,

N 3

which

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which I have been hitherto describing, 'tis evident Ought as indispensably to govern Mens Actions, as it Cannot but necessarily determine their Assent.

And from
the Judg-
ment of
Mens Con-
sciences up-
on their
own past
Actions,

Now that the Case is truly thus ; that the eternal Differences of Good and Evil, the unalterable Rule of Right and Equity, do necessarily and unavoidably determine the Judgment, and force the Assent of all Men that use any Consideration ; is undeniably manifest from the universal *Experience* of Mankind. For no Man *willingly and deliberately* transgresses this Rule, in any *great and considerable* Instance ; but he acts contrary to the Judgment and Reason of his own Mind, and secretly Reproaches himself for so doing. And no Man observes and obeys it steddily, especially in Cases of *Difficulty and Temptation*, when it interferes with any present Interest, Pleasure or Passion ; but his own Mind commends and applauds him for his Resolution in executing what his Conscience could not forbear giving its Assent to, as Just and Right. And this is what St. Paul means, when he says, (*Rom. ii. 14, 15.*) that *when the Gentiles which have not the Law, do by Nature the Things contained in the Law, these, having not the Law, are a Law unto themselves ; which shew the Work of the Law written in their Hearts, their Conscience also bearing Witness, and their Thoughts the mean While accusing, or else excusing one another.*

Of that
natural
Knowledge
which
Plato
thought
to be Remi-
niscence.

It was a very wise Observation of Plato, which he received from Socrates ; that if you take a young Man, impartial and unprejudiced, one that never had any Learning, nor any Experience in the World ; and examine him about the *natural Relations and Proportions* of Things, [or the *moral Differences* of Good and Evil ;] you may, only by asking him Questions, without teaching him any Thing at all directly, cause him to express in his Answers just and adequate Notions of *Geometrical Truths*, [and true and exact Determinations concerning *Matters of Right*

Right and Wrong.] From whence *He* thought it was to be concluded, that all Knowledge and Learning is nothing but Memory, or only a Recollecting upon every new Occasion, what had been before known in a State of *Præ-existence*. And some Others, both Ancient and Modern, have concluded that the *Ideas* of all first and simple Truths, either Natural or Moral, are *Innate* and originally *impressed* or *stamped* upon the Mind. In their Inference from the Observation, the Authors of Both these Opinions seem to be mistaken. But thus much it proves unavoidably, That the Differences, Relations, and Proportions of Things both Natural and Moral, in which all unprejudiced Minds thus naturally agree, are certain, unalterable, and real *in the Things themselves*, and do not at all depend on the variable Opinions, Fancies, or Imaginations of Men prejudiced by Education, Laws, Customs or evil Practices: And also that the Mind of Man naturally and unavoidably gives its *Assent*, as to natural and geometrical Truth, so also to the moral Differences of Things, and to the Fitness and Reasonableness of the Obligation of the everlasting Law of Righteousness, whenever fairly and plainly proposed.

Some Men indeed, who, by Means of a very evil and vicious Education, or through a long Habit of Wickedness and Debauchery, have extremely corrupted the Principles of their Nature, and have long accustomed themselves to bear down their own Reason, by the Force of Prejudice, Lust and Passion; that they may not be forced to confess themselves self-condemned, will confidently and absolutely contend that they do not really see any natural and necessary Difference between what we call *Right* and *Wrong*, *Just* and *Unjust*; that the Reason and Judgment of their own Mind does not tell them they are under any such indispensable Obligations, as we would endeavour to persuade them; and that they

*The most
profligate
Men not
utterly in-
sensible of
the Differ-
ence of
Good and
Evil.*

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are not sensible they ought to be governed by any other Rule, than their own Will and Pleasure. But even these Men, the most Profligate of all Mankind; however industriously they endeavour to conceal and deny their Self-condemnation; yet cannot avoid making a Discovery of it sometimes when they are not aware, of it. For Example: There is no Man so vile and desperate, who commits at any Time a Murder and Robbery, with the most unrelenting

Mind; but * would chuse, if such a Thing could be proposed to him, to obtain all the same Profit or Advantage, whatsoever it be that he aims at, *without* committing the Crime, rather than *with* it; even though he was sure to go unpunished for committing the Crime. Nay I believe, there is no Man, even in Mr. *Hobbs's* State

of Nature, and of Mr. *Hobbs's* own Principles; but if he was equally assured of securing his main End, his Self-preservation, by either Way; would chuse to preserve himself rather *without* destroying all his Fellow-Creatures, than *with* it; even supposing all Impunity, and all other future Conveniencies of Life, equal in either Case. Mr. *Hobbs's* own Scheme, of Mens agreeing by Compact to preserve one another, can hardly be Supposed without this. And this plainly evinces, that the Mind of Man unavoidably acknowledges a natural and necessary Difference between Good and Evil, antecedent to all arbitrary and positive Constitution whatsoever.

But the Truth of this, that the Mind of Man naturally and necessarily Assents to the eternal Law of Righteousness, may still better and more clearly and more universally appear, from the Judgment that Men pass upon each *Others* Actions, than from what we can discern concerning their Consciousness

of

* Quis est enim, aut quis unquam fuit, aut avaritia tam ardenti, aut tam effrænatis cupiditatibus, ut eandem illam rem, quam adipisci scelere quovis velit, non multis partibus malit ad sese, etiam omni impunitate proposita, sine facinore, quam illo modo pervenire? *Cic. de Finib. lib. 3.*

Mens natural Sense of eternal moral Obligations proved from the Judgment they all pass upon the Actions of Others.

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of their *Own*. For Men may dissemble and conceal from the World the Judgment of their own Conscience; nay, by a strange Partiality, they may even impose upon and deceive *Themselves*; (For who is there that does not sometimes allow himself, nay, and even justify himself in that, wherein he condemns Another?) But Mens Judgments concerning the Actions of *Others*, especially where they have no Relation to Themselves, or Repugnance to their Interest, are commonly impartial: And from this we may judge what Sense Men naturally have of the unalterable Difference of Right and Wrong. Now the Observation which every one cannot but make in this Matter, is This; that *Virtue* and true *Goodness*, *Righteousness* and *Equity*, are Things so truly noble and excellent, so lovely and venerable in themselves, and do so necessarily approve themselves to the Reason and Consciences of Men, that even those very Persons, who, by the prevailing Power of some Interest or Lust, are themselves drawn aside out of the Paths of Virtue, † can yet

hardly ever forbear to give it its true Character and Commendation in *Others*. And this Observation holds true, not only in the Generality of Vicious Men, but very

† Placet suapte natura, adeoque gratiosa virtus est, ut insitum etiam sit Malis probare meliores. *Senec. de Benef. l. 4.*

frequently even in the worst Sort of them, *viz.* those who persecute others for being better than themselves. Thus the Officers, who were sent by the *Pharisees* to apprehend our Saviour, could not forbear declaring that *he spake as never Man spake.* John vii.

And the *Roman* Governor, when he gave Sentence 46.

that he should be Crucified, could not at the same Instant forbear openly declaring, that he *found no* John xviii.

Fault in him. Even in This Case, Men cannot chuse 38.

but think well of those Persons, whom the *Dominion of their Lusts* will not suffer them to imitate, or whom their *present Interest, and the Necessity of their*
Worldly

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Worldly Affairs compel them to discourage. They cannot but desire, that they themselves were the Men they are not; and wish with *Balaam*, that though they *imitate not the Life*, yet, at least, they might *die the Death of the Righteous*, and that their *last End* might be like theirs. And hence it is that

* Οὐ γὰρ ὅσον οὐσίας ἀρετῆς
ἀπεσφαλμένοι τυγχάνουσιν οἱ
πολλοὶ τοσούτον καὶ τοῦ κρίνειν
τὰς ἄλλας οἱ πονηροὶ καὶ ἄχρηστοί·
δεῖον δὲ τι καὶ εὐστοχόν εἶναι
καὶ τοῖσι κακοῖς, ὥστε πάντοτε
καὶ τῶν σφόδρα κακῶν, εὖ
τοῖς λόγοις καὶ δόξαις διακροῦνται
τὰς ἀμείνων τῶν ἀνθρώπων καὶ
τοὺς χεῖρας. *Plato de Leg. lib.*
12.

Plato judiciously observes, * that even the worst of Men seldom or never make so wrong Judgment concerning *Persons*, as they do concerning *Things*; there being in *Virtue* an unaccountable, and, as it were, *divine Force*, which, whatever *Confusion* Men endeavour to introduce in *Things* by their vicious Discourses and debauched Practices, yet almost always compels them to distinguish Right concerning *Persons*, and makes them admire and praise Just and Equitable and Honest Men. On the contrary, *Vice* and *Injustice*, *Profaneness* and *Debauchery*, are Things so absolutely odious in their own Nature, that, however they *insinuate* themselves into the *Practice*, yet they can never gain over to themselves the Judgment of Mankind. They who *Do Evil*, yet *See and Approve* what is Good; and condemn, in *others*, what they blindly allow in *themselves*; nay, and very frequently condemn even *themselves* also, not without great Disorder and Uneasiness of Mind, in those very Things wherein they allow themselves. At least, there is hardly any wicked Man but, when his own Case is represented to him under the Person of another, will freely enough pass Sentence against the Wickedness he himself is guilty of; and, with sufficient Severity, exclaim against all Iniquity. This shews abundantly, that all Variation from the eternal Rule of Right is, *absolutely and in the Nature of the Thing itself*, to be abhorred and detested; and that the unprejudiced

prejudiced Mind of Man, as naturally *disapproves* Injustice in moral Matters, as in natural Things it cannot but *dissent from Falseness*, or *dislike Incongruities*. Even in reading the Histories of past and far distant Ages, where, 'tis manifest, we can have no Concern for the *Events of Things*, nor Prejudices concerning the *Characters of Persons*; Who is there, that does not praise and admire, nay, highly esteem, and, in his Imagination, love (as it were) the Equity, Justice, Truth and Fidelity of some Persons; and, with the greatest Indignation and Hatred, detest the Barbarity, Injustice, and Treachery of others? Nay, further; When the Prejudices of corrupt Minds lie all on the Side of Injustice; as when we have obtained some very great Profit or Advantage through Another Man's Treachery or Breach of Faith; yet, * who is

there, that, upon That very Occasion, does not (even to a Proverb) dislike the *Person* and the *Action*, how much soever he may rejoice at the *Event*? But when

* *Quis Pulum Numitorum, Fregellanum proditorem, quanquam Reipublicæ nostræ profuit, non odit? Cic. de Finib. lib. 5.*

we come *ourselves* to *suffer* by Iniquity, *Then*, Where are all the Arguments and Sophistries, by which Unjust Men, while they are oppressing Others, would persuade themselves, that they are not sensible of any natural Difference between Good and Evil? When it comes to be these Mens *own* Case, to be oppressed by Violence, or over-reached by Fraud; where *Then* are all their Pleas against the eternal Distinction of Right and Wrong? How, on the contrary, do they *Then* cry out for Equity, and exclaim against Injustice! How do they *Then* challenge and object against Providence, and think neither God nor Man severe enough in punishing the Violators of Right and Truth! Whereas, if there was no natural and eternal Difference between Just and Unjust, no Man could have any Reason to complain of Injury, any other than what Laws and

Compacts

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Compacts made so ; which, in innumerable Cases, will be always to be evaded.

Answer
to the Ob-
jection
drawn
from the
total Igno-
rance of
some bar-
barous Na-
tions in
Matters of
Morality.

There is but one Thing, that I am sensible of, which can here, with any Colour, be objected against what has been hitherto said concerning the Necessity of the Mind's giving its Assent to the eternal Law of Righteousness ; and that is the *total Ignorance*, which some whole Nations are reported to lie under, of the Nature and Force of these moral Obligations. The Matter of Fact is not very true : But if it was, 'tis certain there are more Nations and People totally ignorant of the plainest Mathematical Truths ; as, of the Proportion, for Example, of a *Square* to a *Triangle* of the same Base and Heighth : And yet these Truths are such, to which the Mind cannot but give its Assent necessarily and unavoidably, as soon as they are distinctly proposed to it. All that this Objection proves therefore, supposing the Matter of it to be true, is only this ; Not, that the Mind of Man can ever dissent from the Rule of Right ; much less, that there is no necessary Difference in Nature between moral Good and Evil ; any more than it proves, that there is no certain and necessary Proportion of Numbers, Lines, or Figures : But this it proves only, that Men have great Need to be taught and instructed in some very plain and easy, as well as certain Truths ; and, if they be important Truths, that then Men have Need also to have them frequently inculcated, and strongly inforced upon them. Which is very true ; and is (as shall hereafter be particularly made to appear) one good Argument for the Reasonableness of expecting a *Revelation*.

Of the
principal
Moral Ob-
ligations in
particular.

4. Thus it appears *in general*, that the Mind of Man cannot avoid giving its *Assent* to the eternal Law of Righteousness ; that is, cannot but acknowledge the Reasonableness and Fitness of Mens governing all their Actions by the Rule of Right or Equity :

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Equity : And also, that this *Assent* is a *formal Obligation* upon every Man actually and constantly to conform himself to that Rule. I might now from hence deduce, *in particular*, all the several Duties of Morality or Natural Religion. But because this would take up too large a Portion of my intended Discourse, and may easily be supplied abundantly out of several late excellent Writers, I shall only mention the three great and principal Branches from which all the other and smaller Instances of Duty do naturally flow, or may without Difficulty be derived.

First then, in respect of God, the Rule of Right-^{Of Piety,}
eousness is, that we *keep up constantly, in our Minds,*^{or Mens}
the highest possible Honour, Esteem, and Veneration^{Duty to-}
for him ; which must express itself in proper and re-^{wards}
spective Influences upon all our Passions, and in the^{God.}
suitable Direction of all our Actions : That we worship
and adore Him, and Him alone, as the only Supreme
Author, Preserver, and Governor of all Things :
That we employ our whole Beings, and all our Powers
and Faculties, in his Service, and for his Glory ; that
is, in encouraging the Practice of universal Righteous-
ness, and promoting the Designs of his Divine Goodness
amongst Men, in such Way and Manner as shall at any
Time appear to be his Will we should do it : And,
finally, that, to enable us to do this continually, we
pray unto him constantly for whatever we stand in need
of, and return him continual and hearty Thanks for
whatever good Things we at any Time receive. There
is no Congruity or Proportion in the uniform Dis-
position and correspondent Order of any Bodies or
Magnitudes ; no Fitness or Agreement in the Ap-
plication of similar and equal Geometrical Figures
one to another, or in the Comparing them one
with another ; so visible and conspicuous, as is
the Beauty and Harmony of the Exercise of God's
several Attributes, meeting with suitable Returns
of Duty and Honour from all his rational Creatures
throughout the Universe. The Consideration of
his

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his *Eternity and Infinity*, his *Knowledge* and his *Wisdom*, necessarily commands our highest *Admiration*. The Sense of his *Omnipresence* forces a perpetual *awful Regard* towards him. His *Supreme Authority*, as being the *Creator, Preserver, and absolute Governor* of all Things, obliges us to pay him all possible *Honour and Veneration, Adoration and Worship*: And his *Unity* requires, that it be paid to *Him alone*. His *Power and Justice* demand our *Fear*. His *Mercy and Placableness* encourage our *Hope*. His *Goodness* necessarily excites our *Love*. His *Veracity and Unchangeableness* secure our *Trust* in him. The Sense of our having *received our Being and all our Powers from him*, makes it infinitely reasonable that we should *employ our whole Beings, and all our Faculties, in his Service*. The Consciousness of our continual *Dependance* upon him, both for our *Preservation* and the *Supply* of every Thing we want, obliges us to constant *Prayer*. And every good Thing we enjoy, the Air we breathe, and the Food we eat, the Rain from Heaven, and the fruitful Seasons, all the Blessings and Comforts of the *present Time*, and the Hopes and Expectations we have of *what is to come*, do

* all demand our heartiest *Gratitude* and *Thanksgiving* to him. The Suitableness and Proportion, the Correspondency and Connexion of each of these Things respectively, is as plain and conspicuous as the Shining of the Sun at Noon-day. And 'tis the greatest Absurdity and Perverseness in the World, for Creatures indued with *Reason*, to attempt to break through and transgress this necessary Order and Dependency of Things. All *Inanimate* and all *Irrational Beings*,

* Quem vero Astrorum Ordines, quem dierum noctiumq; vicissitudines, quem mensium temperatio, quemq; ea quæ gignuntur nobis at fruendum, non *Gratum* esse cogant; hunc Hominem omnino numerare quî decet? Cic. de Legib. lib. 2.

Εἰ γὰρ νοῦν εἴχομεν, ἄλλό τι ἔδει ἡμᾶς ποιεῖν καὶ κοινῇ καὶ ἰδίᾳ, ἢ ὑμνεῖν τὸ θεῖον, καὶ εὐφημεῖν, καὶ ἐπεξέρχεσθαι τὰς χάριτας; ἐκ ἔδει καὶ σκᾶπλοντας καὶ ἀρουῖλας καὶ ἐσθίουῖλας ἀδεῖν τὸν ὕμνον τὸν εἰς θεόν. Μέγας ὁ θεός, ὅτι ἡμῖν παρέσχεν ὄργανα

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ings, by the *Necessity* of their Nature, constantly obey the Laws of their Creation ; and tend regularly to the Ends for which they

ταῦτα δὲ ὡς τὴν
θα ; Μέγας ὁ Θεός,
δίδωκεν, &c. Arrian. lib.
cap. 16.

were appointed. How monstrous then is it, that *Reasonable Creatures*, merely because they are not *Necessitated*, should abuse that glorious Privilege of *Liberty*, by which they are exalted in Dignity above the rest of God's Creation, to make themselves the alone *Unreasonable* and Disorderly Part of the Universe ! That a *Tree* planted in a fruitful Soil, and watered continually with the Dew of Heaven, and cherished constantly with the kindly Warmth and benign Influence of the Sun-beams, should yet never bring forth either *Leaves* or *Fruit*, is in no Degree so irregular and contrary to Nature, as that a *Rational Being*, created after the Image of God, and conscious of God's doing every Thing for him that becomes the *Relation* of an infinitely good and bountiful *Creator* to his *Creatures*, should yet never on *His* Part make any Return of those Duties which arise necessarily from the *Relation* of a *Creature* to his *Creator*.

Secondly. In Respect of our *Fellow-creatures*, the *Of Righte-*
Rule of Righteousness is ; that in particular we so ousness, or
deal with every Man as in like Circumstances we could the Duty of
reasonably expect he should deal with Us ; and that in Men one
general we endeavour, by an universal Benevolence, to towards
another.
promote the Welfare and Happiness of all Men. The
former Branch of this Rule is *Equity* ; the latter
is *Love*.

As to the former, viz. *Equity* : The Reason *Of Justice*
which obliges every Man in *Practice* so to deal al- and Equity.
ways with another, as he would reasonably expect
that *Others* should in like Circumstances deal with
Him ; is the very same, as That which forces him
in *Speculation* to affirm, that if one Line or Number
be equal to another, That other is reciprocally equal
to

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It. *Iniquity* is the very same in *Action*, as *Falsity* or *Contradiction* in *Theory*; and the same Cause which makes the one *Absurd*, makes the other *Unreasonable*. Whatever Relation or Proportion one Man in any Case bears to another; the same That Other, when put in like Circumstances, bears to Him. Whatever I judge reasonable or unreasonable, for *Another* to do for *Me*; That, by the same Judgment, I declare reasonable or unreasonable, that I in the like Case should do for *Him*. And to deny this, either in Word or Action, is as if a Man should contend, that, tho' *two and three* are equal to *five*, yet *five* are not equal to *two and three*. Wherefore

* Nihil est unum uni tam simile, tam par, quam Omnes inter nosmetipsos sumus, Quod si *depravatio consuetudinum*, si *opinionum vanitas*, non imbecillitatem animorum torqueret, & flecteret quocunq; cœpisset; sui nemo ipse tam similis esset, quam omnes sunt omnium; — & coleretur *Jus æque ab omnibus*. Cic. de Leg. lib. 1.

* were not Men strangely and most unnaturally corrupted, by *perverse and unaccountably false Opinions*, and *monstrous evil Customs and Habits*, prevailing against the clearest and plainest Reason in the World: It would be impossible that universal Equity should not be practised by all Mankind; and especially among *Equals*, where the Proportion of Equity is simple and obvious, and every Man's own Case is already the same with all others, without any nice Comparing or Transposing of Circumstances. It would be as impossible, that † a Man, contrary to the eternal Reason of Things, should desire to gain some small Profit to Himself, by doing Violence and Damage to his Neighbour; as that he should be willing to be deprived of Necessaries himself, to satisfy the unreasonable Covetousness or Ambition of another. In a Word; it would be impossible for Men not to be as much ashamed of *Doing Iniquity*, as they are of *Believing Contradictions*. In considering indeed the

† Hoc exigit ipsa Naturæ ratio, quæ est lex divina & humana; cui parere qui velit, nunquam committet ut *alienum appetat*, & id, quod *alteri detraxerit, sibi assumat*. Cic. de Offic. lib. 3.

ing to be deprived of Necessaries himself, to satisfy the unreasonable Covetousness or Ambition of another. In a Word; it would be impossible for Men not to be as much ashamed of *Doing Iniquity*, as they are of *Believing Contradictions*. In considering indeed the

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the Duties of *Superiors* and *Inferiors* in various Relations, the Proportion of Equity is somewhat more complex; But still it may always be deduced from the same Rule of *doing as we would be done by*, if careful Regard be had at the same Time to the *Difference of Relation*: That is, if in considering what is fit for you to do to another, you always take into the Account, not only every Circumstance of the *Action*, but also every Circumstance wherein the *Person* differs from you; And in judging what you would desire that Another, if your Circumstances were transposed, should do to you; you always consider, not what any unreasonable Passion or private Interest would prompt you, but what impartial Reason would dictate to you to desire. For Example: A *Magistrate*, in order to deal equitably with a *Criminal*, is not to consider what *Fear* or *Self-love* would cause Him, in the Criminal's Case, to *desire*; but what *Reason* and the *public Good* would oblige him to *acknowledge* was fit and just for him to *expect*. And the same Proportion is to be observed, in deducing the Duties of *Parents* and *Children*, of *Masters* and *Servants*, of *Governors* and *Subjects*, of *Citizens* and *Foreigners*; in what Manner every Person is obliged, by the Rule of Equity, to behave himself in each of these and all other Relations. In the regular and uniform Practice of all which Duties among all Mankind, in their several and respective Relations, through the whole Earth, consists That *Universal Justice*, which is the Top and Perfection of all Virtues: Which if, as * *Plato* says, it could be represented visibly to mortal Eyes, would raise in us an inexpressible Love and Admiration of it: Which would introduce into the World such a glorious and happy State, as the ancient Poets have attempted to describe in their

O Fiction

* Δεινὰς γὰρ ἂν παρῆχεν ἑρῶ-
τας, εἴτε τοιοῦτον ἑαυτῆς ἐναργὲς
εἶδωλον παρῆχαιο, &c. Plat. in
Phædr.

Quæ si oculis cerneretur,
mirabiles amores, ut ait *Plato*,
excitaret sui. *Cic. de Offic.*
lib. 1.

Oculorum est in nobis sen-

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ius, quibus sapien-
non cernimus; Quàm
illa ardentes amores excitaret
fui, si videretur! *Id. de fin. lib. 2.*

* "Αυτὴ μὲν ἐν ἡ δίκαιοσύνῃ,
ἀρετὴ μὲν ἐστὶ τελεία· καὶ ἔθ'
"Εσπερὶ ἔθ' ἑωὶ ἔτο δαυμασ-
τόν. *Eth. lib. 5. cap. 3.*

Stars so ornamental to the visible Fabrick of the
World, as the universal Practice of this illustrious
Virtue would be conducive to the Glory and Ad-
vantage of the rational Part of this lower Creation:
Which, lastly, is so truly noble and excellent in its
own Nature, that the wisest and most considering

† Non enim mihi est vita
mea utilior, quam animi talis
affectio, neminem ut violem
commodi mei gratia. *Cic. de
Offic. lib. 3.*

‡ Καὶ τὸ παρὰπαν ζῆν, μέ-
γιστον μὲν κακὸν τὸν ἐρύπαντα
χρόνον ἀθάνατον ὄντα, καὶ κεκλή-
μενον πάντα τὰ λεγόμενα ἀγαθὰ,
πλὴν δικαιοσύνης τε καὶ ἀρετῆς
ἀπάσης. *Plato de Leg. lib. 2.*

Fiction of a golden Age: *Which*,
in itself, is so truly beautiful and
lovely, that, as * *Aristotle* elegantly
expresses it, the Motions of the
heavenly Bodies are not so admira-
bly regular and harmonious, nor
the Brightness of the Sun and

Stars so ornamental to the visible Fabrick of the
World, as the universal Practice of this illustrious
Virtue would be conducive to the Glory and Ad-
vantage of the rational Part of this lower Creation:
Which, lastly, is so truly noble and excellent in its
own Nature, that the wisest and most considering
Men have always declared, that †
neither Life itself, nor ‡ all other
possible Enjoyments in the World,
put together, are of any Value or
Esteem, in Comparison of, or in
Competition with, that right Tem-
per and Disposition of Mind, from
which flows the Practice of this
universal Justice and Equity. On
the contrary: *Injustice* and *Iniquity*,
Violence, Fraud, and Oppression;

the universal Confusion of Right and Wrong, and
the general Neglect and Contempt of all the Duties
arising from Mens several Relations one to another;
is the greatest and most unnatural Corruption of
God's Creation, that 'tis possible for depraved and
rebellious Creatures to introduce: As they them-
selves, who practise Iniquity most, and are most
desirous to defend it, yet, whenever it comes to be
their own Turn to suffer by it, are not very back-
ward to acknowledge. To comprise this Matter
therefore in one Word: What the Sun's forsaking
that equal Course, which now, by diffusing gentle
Warmth and Light, cherishes and invigorates every
Thing in a due Proportion through the whole
System;

System; and, on the contrary, his burning up, by an irregular and disorderly Motion, some of the Orbs with insupportable Heat, and leaving others to perish in extreme Cold and Darknels: What this, I say, would be to the *natural World*; That very same Thing, Injustice and Tyranny, Iniquity and all Wickedness, is to the *moral and rational* Part of the Creation. The only Difference is this: That the one is an *obstinate and wilful* Corruption, and most *perverse* Depravation of Creatures made after the Image of God; and a violating the *eternal and unalterable* Law or Reason of Things, which is of the utmost Importance: Whereas the other would be only a Revolution or Change of the *arbitrary and temporary* Frame of Nature.

The Second Branch of the Rule of Righteousness with Respect to our Fellow-creatures, I said, was *universal Love or Benevolence*, that is, not only the doing barely what is Just and Right in our Dealings with every Man, but also a constant Endeavouring to promote in general, to the utmost of our Power, the Welfare and Happiness of all Men. The Obligation to which Duty also may easily be deduced from what has been already laid down. For if (as has been before proved) there be a natural and necessary Difference between Good and Evil, and that which is Good is Fit and Reasonable, and that which is Evil is Unreasonable to be done; and that which is the greatest Good, is always the *most* Fit and Reasonable to be chosen: Then, as the Goodness of God extends itself universally over all his Works through the whole Creation, by doing always what is absolutely best in the Whole; so every rational Creature *ought* in its Sphere and Station, according to its respective Powers and Faculties, to do all the Good it can to all its Fellow-creatures. To which End, *universal Love and Benevolence* is as plainly the most direct,

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Universaliter autem verum est, quod non certius *maximus puncti* Lineam producit, aut *additio numerorum* Summam, quam quod *Benevolentia* effectum præstat bonum. *Cumberland. de Leg. Naturæ, pag. 10.*

Pari sane ratione [*ac in Arithmeticis operationibus*] doctrinæ Moralis veritas fundatur in immutabili cohærentia inter *Felicitatem Summam* quam hominum vires assequi valent, & *Actus benevolentiae universalis*. *Id. ibid. pag. 23.*

Eadem est mensura *Boni Malique*, quæ mensura est *verifalsiq;* in propositionibus pronuntiantibus de efficacia *Motuum* ad rerum aliarum *conservationem & corruptionem* facientium. *Id. pag. 30.*

† Angusta admodum est *circa nostra* tantummodo *commoda*, *Lætitiæ* materia; sed eadem erit amplissima, si *aliorum omnium* *Felicitas* cordi nobis sit. Quippe hæc ad illam, eandem habebit proportionem, quam habet immensa *Beatitudo Dei*, totiusq; *humani generis*, ad curtam illam *fictæ felicitatis* supellectilem, quam uni homini, ei; *invidio & malevolo*, fortunæ bona possint suppeditare. *Id. ibid. pag. 214.*

direct, certain and effectual Means, as * in Mathematics the *Flowing of a Point* is to produce a *Line*; or, in Arithmetic, the *Addition of Numbers* to produce a *Sum*; or, in Physics, *certain Kinds of Motions* to *preserve certain Bodies*, which other *Kinds of Motions* tend to corrupt. Of all which the Mind of Man is so naturally sensible, that, except in such Men whose Affections are prodigiously corrupted by most unnatural and habitual vicious Practices, there is no Duty whatsoever, the Performance whereof affords a Man so † ample Pleasure and Satisfaction, and fills his Mind with so comfortable a Sense of his having done the greatest Good he was capable to do, of his having best answered the Ends of his Creation, and nearest imitated the Perfections of his Creator, and consequently of his having fully complied with the highest and principal Obligations of his Nature, as the Performance of this one Duty, of *universal Love and Benevolence* naturally affords. But further; The

Obligation to this great Duty may also otherwise be deduced from the *Nature of Man*, in the following Manner: Next to that natural *Self-love*, or Care of his own Preservation, which every one necessarily has in the first Place for *himself*, there is in all Men a certain natural Affection for their *Children and Posterity*, who have a Dependence upon them; and for their *Relations and Friends*, who

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who have an Intimacy with them. And because the Nature of Man is such, that they cannot live comfortably in independent Families, without still further Society and Commerce with each other; therefore they naturally desire to increase their Dependencies by multiplying Affinities; and to enlarge their Friendships by mutual good Offices; and to establish Societies by a Communication of Arts and Labour: Till * by Degrees the Affection of *single Persons* becomes a Friendship of *Families*, and this enlarges itself to a Society of *Towns* and *Cities* and *Nations*, and terminates in the *agreeing Community of all Mankind*. The Foundation, Preservation, and Perfection of which universal Friendship or Society is *mutual Love and Benevolence*. And nothing hinders the World from being *actually* put into so happy a State, but perverse Iniquity and unreasonable Want of mutual Charity. Wherefore since Men are plainly so constituted by Nature, that they stand in Need of each other's Assistance to make themselves easy in the World; and are fitted to live in Communities; and Society is absolutely necessary for them; and mutual Love and Benevolence is the only possible Means to establish this Society in any tolerable and durable Manner; and in This Respect † All Men stand upon the same Level, and have the same natural Wants and Desires, and are in the same Need of each other's Help, and are equally capable of enjoying the Benefit and Advantage of Society: 'Tis evident every Man is bound by

* In omni honesto, nihil est tam illustre, nec quod latius pateat, quam conjunctio inter homines hominum, & quasi quædam societas & communicatio utilitatum, & ipsa Charitas generis humani; quæ nata a primo satù, quo a procreatoribus *nati* diliguntur, — serpit sensim foras, *cognitionibus* primum, — deinde *totius complexu gentis humanæ*. Cic. de Finib. lib. 5.

† Nihil est unum uni tam simile, tam par, quam omnes inter nosmetipsos sumus. Quod nisi depravatio, &c. sui nemo ipse tam similis esset, quam omnes sunt omnium. Cic. de Legib. lib. 1.

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* Impellimur autem Natura, ut prodesse velimus quamplurimis. *Cic. de Finib. lib. 3.*

† Hominem esse quasi partem quandam civitatis & universi generis humani, eumq; esse conjunctum cum hominibus Humana quadam Societate. *Cic. Quæst. Academ. lib. 1.*

‡ Homines hominum causa sunt generati, ut ipsi inter se alii aliis prodesse possint. *Cic. de Offic. lib. 1.*

Ad tuendos conservandosq; homines, hominem natum esse. *Cic. de Finib. lib. 3.*

|| Omnes inter se naturali quadam indulgentia & benevolentia contineri. *Cic. de Legib. lib. 1.*

* Ex quo efficitur, hominem naturæ obediens, homini nocere non posse. *Cic. de Offic. lib. 3.*

† Οὐτε ἄρα ἀνταδικεῖν δεῖ, ὅτε κακῶς ποιεῖν ἑδὲνα ἀνθρώπων, ἑδ' ἂν ὁτιᾶν πασχηῖ ὑπ' αὐτῶν. *Plato in Critone*

‡ Tum illud effici, quod quibusdam incredibile videatur, sit autem necessarium, ut nihil sese plus quam alterum diligat. *Cic. de Legib. lib. 1.*

the Law of his Nature, as he is also prompted by the * Inclination of his uncorrupted Affections, to † look upon himself as a Part and Member of that one universal Body or Community, which is made up of all Mankind; to think himself ‡ born to promote the public Good and Welfare of all his Fellow-creatures; and consequently obliged, as the necessary and only effectual Means to that End, to || embrace them All with universal Love and Benevolence: So that he * cannot, without acting contrary to the Reason of his own Mind, and transgressing the plain and known Law of his Being, do willingly any Hurt and Mischief to any Man; no, † not even to those who have first injured him; but ought, for the publick Benefit, to endeavour to appease with Gentleness, rather than exasperate with Retaliations; and finally, to comprehend all in one Word, (which is the Top and complete Perfection of this great Duty) ought to ‡ Love all others as him-

self. This is the Argumentation of that great Master, Cicero: Whole Knowledge and Understanding of the true State of Things, and of the original Obligations of human Nature, was as much greater than Mr. Hobbs's, as his Helps and Advantages to attain that Knowledge were less.

Of Sobriety, or Mens Duty towards themselves, and of the Unlawfulness of Self-murder

Thirdly, with Respect to Ourselves, the Rule of Righteousness is, that every Man preserve his own Being, as long as he is able, and take Care to keep himself

self at all Times in such Temper and Disposition both of Body and Mind, as may best fit and enable him to perform his Duty in all other Instances : That is ; he ought to bridle his Appetites with Temperance ; to govern his Passions with Moderation ; and to apply himself to the Business of his present Station in the World, whatsoever it be, with Attention and Contentment. That every Man ought to preserve his own Being, as long as he is able, is evident ; because what he is not himself the Author and Giver of, he can never, of himself, have just Power or Authority to take away. He that sent us into the World, and alone knows for how long Time he appointed us our Station here, and when we have finished all the Business he intended we should do, can alone judge when 'tis fit for us to be taken hence, and has alone Authority to dismiss and discharge us. This Reasoning has been admirably applied by *Plato*, *Cicero*, and others of the best Philosophers. So that, though the *Stoicks* of old, and the *Deists* of late, have in their ranting Discourses, and some few of them in their rash Practice, contradicted it, yet they have never been able, with any Colour of Reason, to answer or evade the Force of the Argument : Which, indeed, to speak the Truth, has been urged by the forementioned Philosophers with such singular Beauty as well as invincible Strength, that it seems not capable of having any Thing added to it. Wherefore I shall give it you only in some of their own Words. *We Men*, (says * *Plato* in the Person of *Socrates*) are all, by the Appointment of God, in a certain Prison or Custody, which we ought not to break out of, and run away. *We are as Servants, or, as Cattle, in the Hand of God.* And would not any of Us, saith he, if one of our Servants should, contrary

* "Εν τινι φρέρα ἔσμεν οἱ ἄνθρωποι, καὶ εἰ δεῖ δὴ ἑαυτὸν ἐκ ταύτης λύειν, εἴδ' ἀποδιδράσκειν. — Θεός ἐστιν ἡμῶν τὰς ἐπιμελημένος καὶ ἡμᾶς τὰς ἀνθρώπων ἐν τῶν κλημάτων τοῖς θεοῖς εἶναι. — Οὐκ ἔν καὶ σὺ ἄν. τῶν σαυτὲ κλημάτων εἴτι αὐτὸ ἑαυτὸ ἀποκλινῇ, μὴ σημαντὸς σε ὅτι βέλει αὐτὸ τιθῆναι, χαλεπάνοις ἂν αὐτῷ, καὶ, εἴ τινα ἔχοις τιμωρίαν, τιμωρεῖσθαι αὐτόν. *Plato in Phæd.*

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to our Direction, and to escape out of our Service, kill himself, think that we had just Reason to be very angry, and, if it was in our Power, punish him for it? So likewise

* Vetat enim dominans ille in nobis Deus, injussu hinc nos suo demigrare. Cum vero causam justam Deus ipse dederit, nã ille medius fidius vir sapiens, lætus ex his tenebris in lucem illam excesserit: Nec tamen illa vincula carceris ruperit; leges enim vetant; sed tanquam a magistratu, aut ab aliqua potestate legitima, sic a Deo evocatus, atq; emissus, exierit. *Cic. Tusc. Quæst. lib. 1.*

† Illud breve vitæ reliquum nec avide appetendum senibus, nec sine causa deferendum est; Vetatq; *Pythagoras*, injussu Imperatoris, id est, Dei, de præsidio & statione Dei, de præsidio & statione vitæ decedere. *Cic. de Senect.*

‡ Nisi enim Deus is, cujus hoc Templum est omne quod conspicias, istis te corporis custodiis liberaverit; huc tibi aditus patere non potest. — Quare & tibi & piis omnibus retinendus est animus in custodia corporis; nec injussu ejus, a quo ille est nobis datus, ex hominum vita migrandum est; ne munus humanum

Cicero. God, says * he, the Supreme Governor of all Things, forbids us to depart hence without his Order: And though, when the Divine Providence does itself offer us a just Occasion of leaving this World, as when a Man chooses to suffer Death rather than commit Wickedness) a wise Man will then indeed depart joyfully, as out of a Place of Sorrow and Darkness into Light; yet he will not be in such Haste as to break his Prison contrary to Law;

but will go when God calls him, as a Prisoner when dismissed by the Magistrate or lawful Power. Again;

That short Remainder of Life, saith † he, which old Men have a Prospect of, they ought neither too eagerly to desire, nor yet, on the contrary, unreasonably and discontentedly deprive themselves of it: For, as *Pythagoras* teaches, 'tis as unlawful for a Man, without the Command

of God, to remove himself out of the World, as for a Soldier to leave his Post without his General's Order.

And in another Place: Unless That God, saith ‡ he, whose Temple and Palace this whole World is, discharges you himself out of the Prison of the Body, you can never be received to his Favour. Wherefore you, and all pious Men, ought to have Patience to continue in the Body as long as God shall please, who sent us hither; and not force yourselves out

out of the World, before he calls for you; lest you be found Deserters of the Station appointed you of God. And, to mention

no more: That excellent Author, *Arrian*: Wait,

saith * he, *the good Pleasure of God*:

When He signifies it to be his Will, that you should be discharged from this Service, then depart willingly:

But, in the mean Time, have Patience, and tarry in the Place where he has appointed you: Wait, and do not hurry yourselves away wilfully and unreasonably.

The Objections, which the Author of the *Defence of Self-murder* prefixed to the *Oracles of Reason*, has attempted to advance against this Argument, are so very weak and childish, that, 'tis evident, he could not, at the Time he wrote them, believe in earnest that there was any Force in them: As when he says, that the Reason why 'tis not lawful for a Centinel to leave his Station without his Commander's Order is, because he entered into the Service *by his own Consent*; as if God had not a just Power to lay any Commands upon his Creatures without *their own Consent*: Or, when he says, that there are many lawful Ways to seek Death in; as if, because a Man may lawfully venture his Life in many publick Services, therefore it was lawful for him directly to throw it away upon any foolish Discontent. But the Author of that Discourse has since been so just, as to confess his Folly, and retract it publickly himself. Wherefore, to proceed. For the same Reason that a Man is obliged to preserve his own Being at all, he is bound likewise to preserve himself, as far as he is able, in the right Use of all his *Faculties*; that is, to keep himself constantly in such Temper both of Body and Mind, by regulating his Appetites and Passions, as may best fit and enable him to perform his Duty in all other Instances.

For,

assignatum a Deo
deamini. Sic. Somn.

* Ἐκδέξασθε τὸν θεὸν ὅταν ἐκεῖν σήμερι καὶ ὑπολύσῃ ὑμᾶς ταύτης τῆς ὑπηρεσίας, τότε ὑπολύεσθε πρὸς αὐτὸν ἐπὶ δὲ τῇ παρόντι ἀνάχεσθε ἐνοικῶντες ταύτην τὴν χώραν, εἰς ἣν ἐκεῖν ὑμᾶς ἔταξεν. Μείνατε, μὴ ἀλογίως ἀπέλθῃτε. *Arrian. lib. 1.*

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For, as it matters not whether a Soldier deserts his Post, or, by Drunkenness, renders himself incapable of performing his Duty in it : So for a Man to disable himself by any Intemperance or Passion, from performing the necessary Duties of Life, is, at least for that Time, the same Thing as depriving himself of Life. And neither is This all : For great Intemperance and ungoverned Passions not only incapacitate a Man to perform his Duty, but also expose him to run headlong into the Commission of the greatest Enormities : There being no Violence or Injustice whatsoever, which a Man, who has deprived himself of his Reason by Intemperance or Passion, is not capable of being tempted to commit. So that all the additional Obligations, which a Man is any Way under to forbear committing the most flagrant Crimes, lie equally upon him to govern his Passions, and restrain his Appetites : Without doing which, he can never secure himself effectually from being betrayed into the Commission of all Iniquity. This is, indeed, the great Difficulty of Life, to subdue and conquer our unreasonable Appetites and Passions. But 'tis absolutely necessary

* Οἱ μὲν ἄρα νίκης ἕνεκα πάλης καὶ δρόμων καὶ τῶν τοιούτων, ἐτόλμησαν ἀπέχεσθαι. — Οἱ δὲ ἡμέτεροι παῖδες, ἀδυνατήσουσι καρτερεῖν, πολὺ καλλίον δ' ἕνεκα νίκης. *Plato de Leg. lib. 8.*

to be done : And * 'tis moreover the bravest and most glorious Conquest in the World. Lastly : For the same Reason that a Man is obliged not to depart wilfully out of this Life, which is the *general Station* that God has appointed him, he is obliged likewise to attend the Duties of that *particular Station* or Condition of Life, whatsoever it be, wherein Providence has, *at present*, placed him, with Diligence and Contentment : Without being either uneasy and discontented, that Others are placed by Providence in different and superior Stations in the World ; or so extremely and unreasonably solicitous to change his

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his State for the Future, as thereby to neglect his present Duty.

From these three great and general Branches, all the smaller and more particular Instances of Moral Obligations may (as I said) easily be deduced.

5. And now this, (This eternal Rule of Equity, which I have been hitherto describing) is That Reason, which makes the principal Distinction between Men and Beasts. This is the Law of Nature,

The Law of Nature eternal, universal, and absolutely unchangeable.

which (as Cicero excellently expresses it) * is of universal Extent, and everlasting Duration; which can neither be wholly abrogated, nor repealed in any Part of it, nor have any Law made contrary to it, nor be dispensed with by any Authority: Which † was in Force before ever any Law was written, or the Foundation of any City or Commonwealth was laid: Which ‡ was not invented by the Wit of Man, nor established by the Authority of any People; but its Obligation was from Eternity, and the Force of it reaches throughout the Universe: || Which, being founded in the Nature and Reason of Things, did not then begin to be a Law, when it was first written and enacted by Men; but is of the same Original with the eternal Reasons or Proportions of Things, and the Perfections or Attributes of God himself: So that if there was no Law at Rome against Rapes, at that Time when Tarquin offered Violence to

* Est quidem vera lex, recta ratio naturæ congruens, diffusa in omnes, constans, sempiterna, quæ vocet ad officium jubendo; vetando, a fraude deterreat.

Huic legi nec abrogari fas est, neq; derogari ex hac aliquid licet, neq; tota abrogari potest. Nec vero aut per Senatum, aut per populum solvi hac lege possumus. Cic. de Repub. lib. 3. Fragment.

† Lex quæ seculis omnibus ante nata est, quam scripta lex ulla, aut quam omnino civitas constituta. Cic. de Leg. lib. 1.

‡ Legem neq; hominum ingeniis excogitatam, neque scitum aliquod esse populorum, sed æternum quiddam, quod universum mundum regat. Cic. de Legib. lib. 2.

|| Nec si, regnante Tarquinio, nulla erat Romæ scripta lex de stupris, idcirco non contra illam legem sempiternam Sextus Tarquinius vim Lucretiæ attulit. Erat enim ratio profecta a verum natura, & ad recte faciendum impellens, & ad delicto avocans;

quæ non tum denique incipit lex esse, cum scripta est, sed tum cum orta est: orta autem simul est cum mente divina. Cic. de Legib. lib. 2.

Lucretia,

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Lucretia, it does not therefore follow that he was at all the more Excusable, or that his Sin against the eternal Rule of Equity was the less Heinous. This is that Law of Nature, * to which

* In judicio de bonitate harum rerum, æquè omnes ubiq; conveniunt, ac omnia Animalia in motu Cordis & Arteriarum pulsu, aut omnes homines in opinione de nivis candore & splendore Solis. *Cumberland. de Leg. Naturæ, pag. 167.*

the Reason of all Men every-where as naturally and necessarily assents, as all Animals conspire in the Pulse and Motion of their Heart and Arteries, or as all Men agree in their Judgment concerning the Whiteness of Snow, or the Brightness of the Sun. For though, in some nice

Cases, the Bounds of Right and Wrong may indeed (as was before observed) be somewhat difficult to determine; and, in some few even plainer Cases, the Laws and Customs of certain barbarous Nations may be contrary one to another, (which Some have been so weak as to think a just Objection against there being any natural Difference between

Good and Evil at all;) yet, in reality, this † no more disproves the natural Assent of all Mens unprejudiced Reason to the Rule of Right and Equity, than the Difference of most Mens Countenances in general, or the Deformity of some few Monsters in particular, proves that there is no general Likeness or Uniformity in the Bodies of Men.

† Hoc tamen non magis tollit consensum hominum de generali Natura Boni, ejusq; partibus vel speciebus præcipuis, quam levis vultuum diversitas tollit convenientiam inter homines in communi hominum definitione, aut similitudinem inter eos in partium principalium conformatione & usu. Nulla gens est, quæ non sentiat actus Deum diligendi, &c. Nulla gens non sentit gratitudinem erga parentes & benefactores, toti humano generi salutarem esse. Nulla temperamentorum diversitas facit ut quisquam non bonum esse sentiat universis, ut singulorum innocentium vitæ, membra, & libertas conserventur. *Cumberland. de Legib. Naturæ, pag. 166.*

Neq; enim an honorificè de Deo sentiendum sit, neq; an sit amandus, timendus, colendus, dubitari potest. Sunt enim hæc Religionum, per omnes gentes communia.—Deum eo ipso, quod homines fecerit rationales, hoc illis præcepisse, & cordibus omnium insculpisse, ne quisquam cuiquam faceret, quod alium sibi facere iniquum duceret. Hobbs, de Homine, cap. 14. [Inconsistently enough with his own Principles.]

For,

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For, whatever Difference there may be in some particular Laws, 'tis certain, as to the main and principal Branches of Morality, there never was any Nation upon Earth, but owned, that to Love and Honour God, to be grateful to Benefactors, to perform Equitable Compacts, to preserve the Lives of innocent and harmless Men, and the like, were Things fitter and better to be practised than the contrary. In fine: This is that Law of Nature, which, being founded in the eternal Reason of Things, is as absolutely unalterable, as natural Good and Evil, as * Mathematical or Arithmetical Truths, as Light and Darkness, as Sweet and Bitter. The † Observance of which, though no Man should commend it, would yet be truly commendable in itself. Which to suppose depending on the Opinions of Men, and the Customs of Nations, that is, to suppose that What shall be accounted the Virtue of a Man depends merely on Imagination or Custom to determine, is ‡ as absurd as it would be to affirm, that the Fruitfulness of a Tree, or the Strength of a Horse, depends merely on the Imagination of those who judge of it. In a Word, 'Tis That Law, which if it had its Original from the Authority of Men, and could be changed by it, then || all the Commands of the cruellest and most barbarous Tyrants in the World would be as just and equitable as the wisest Laws that ever were. Cic. de Legib. lib. 1.

* Nam ut vera & falsa, ut consequentia & contraria, sua sponte, non aliena, judicantur: sic constans & perpetua ratio vitæ, quæ est virtus; itemq; inconstantia, quod est vitium; sua natura probatur. Cic. de Legib. lib. 1.

† Quod vere dicimus, etiam si a nullo laudetur, laudabile esse natura. Cic. de Offic. lib. 1.

‡ Hæc autem in opinione existimare, non in natura ponere, dementis est. Nam nec Arboris nec Equi virtus, quæ dicitur, in opinione sita est, sed in natura. Cic. de Legib. lib. 1.

|| Jam vero stultissimum illud; existimare omnia justa esse, quæ scita sint in populorum institutis aut legibus. Etiamne si quæ sunt tyrannorum leges, si triginta illi Athenis leges imponere voluissent, aut si omnes Athenienses delectarentur tyrannicis legibus, num idcirco hæ leges justæ haberentur?

made;

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sed si populorum iussus, si principum decretis, si sententiis iudicum, jura constituerentur; jus esset latrocinari, jus adulterare, jus testamenta falsa supponere, si hæc suffragiis aut scitis multitudinis probarentur. Quæ si tanta potentia est stultorum sententiis atq; iussis, ut eorum suffragiis rerum natura vertatur; cur non sanciant, ut quæ mala perniciosaque sunt, habeantur pro bonis ac salutaribus; aut cur, cum jus ex injuriâ lex facere possit, bonum eadem facere non possit ex malo? *Id. ibid.*

† *Eternal Moral Obligations, antecedent, in some Respect, even to this Consideration, of their being the Will and Command of God himself.*

‡ *Virtutis & Vitiorum, sine ulla Divina ratione, grave ipsius conscientiæ pondus est. Cic. de Nat. Deor. lib. 3.*

¶ Deniq; nequis obligationem Legum naturalium arbitrariam & mutabilem a nobis fingi suspicetur, hoc adjiciendum censui; Virtutum exercitium habere rationem medii necessarii ad finem, (seposita consideratione Imperii Divini) manente rerum naturali qualis nunc est. Hoc autem ita intelligo, uti agnoscunt pleriq; omnes, Additionem duarum unitatum, duabus prius positis, necessario constituere numerum quaternarium; aut, uti praxes geometricæ & mechanicæ, problemata propozita solvunt immutabiliter; adeo ut nec sapientia nec voluntas Divina cogitari possit quicquam in contrarium constituere posse. *Cumberland de Legib. Naturæ, pag. 231.*

made; and * to murder Men without Distinction, to confound the Rights of all Families by the grossest Forgeries, to rob with unrestrained Violence, to break Faith continually, and Defraud and Cheat without Reluctance, might by the Decrees and Ordinances of a mad Assembly be made lawful and honest. In which Matters if any Man thinks that the Votes and Suffrages of Fools have such Power, as to be able to change the Nature of Things; why do they not likewise Decree (as Cicero admirably expresses himself,) that poisonous Things may become wholesome; and that any other Thing, which is now Destructive of Mankind, may become Preservative of it.

† 6. Further yet: As this Law of Nature is infinitely superior to all Authority of Men, and independent upon it; so its Obligation, primarily and originally, is ‡ antecedent also even to this Consideration, of its being the positive Will or Command of God himself. For, ¶ as the Addition of certain Numbers necessarily produces a certain Sum; and certain Geometrical or Mechanical Operations give a

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constant and unalterable Solution of certain Problems or Propositions : So, in moral Matters, there are certain necessary and unalterable Respects or Relations of Things which have not their Original from arbitrary and positive Constitution, but are of eternal Necessity in their own Nature. For Example : *

As, in Matters of Sense, the Reason why a Thing is visible, is not because 'tis Seen; but 'tis therefore Seen, because 'tis visible : So in Matters of natural Reason and Morality, that which is Holy and Good (as Creatures depending upon and worshipping God, and practising Justice and Equity in their Dealings with each other, and the like,) is not therefore Holy and Good, because 'tis

commanded to be done; but is therefore commanded by God, because 'tis Holy and Good. The Existence indeed of the Things themselves, whose Proportions and Relations we consider, depend entirely on the mere arbitrary Will and good Pleasure of God, who can create Things when he pleases, and destroy them again whenever he thinks fit. But when Things are created, and so long as it pleases God to continue them in Being; their Proportions, which are abstractly of eternal Necessity, are also in the Things themselves absolutely unalterable. Hence God himself, though he has no Superior, from whose Will to receive any Law of his Actions, yet disdains not to observe the Rule of Equity and Goodness, as † the Law of all his Actions in the Government of the World, and condescends to appeal even to Men

for the Equity and Righteousness of his Judgments. Ezek. xviii. To this Law, the infinite Perfections of his Divine Nature make it necessary for him (as has been be- pag. 38, 39 fore

* Το ὁρώμενον, οὐ διότι ὁρώμενον γὰρ ἐστὶ, διὰ τῷ ὁράται· ἀλλὰ τοῦναντίον, διότι ὁράται, διὰ τῷ ὁρώμενον. [Note, these Words are by Ficinus ridiculously translated *videtur* and *visum est*.] Οὐκ ἔν καὶ τὸ ὁσιόν, διότι ὁσιόν ἐστι, φιλεῖται ὑπὸ τῶν θεῶν· ἀλλ' ἐκ ὅτι φιλεῖται, διὰ τῷ ὁσιόν ἐστι. *Plato in Euthyphr.*

† Καθ' ἡμᾶς γὰρ ἡ αὐτὴ ἀρετὴ ἐστὶ τῶν μακαρίων πάντων· ὥστε καὶ ἡ αὐτὴ ἀρετὴ ἀνθρώπων καὶ θεῶν. *Origen. advers. Celsum, lib. 4.*

dictamina Divini Intellectus fanciuntur in Leges apud ipsum valituras, per immutabilitatem suarum perfectionum. *Cumberland de Leg. Naturæ, pag. 343.*

Solebam ipse quidem, cum aliis plurimis, antequam dominii jurisq; omnis originem universaliter & distincte considerassem; *dominium Dei*, in *Creationem* velut integram ejus *originem*, resolvere. Verum quoniam, &c. — in hanc tandem concessi sententiam, *dominium Dei* esse jus vel potestatem ei a sua Sapientia & Bonitate, velut a *Lege*, datam ad regimen eorum omnium quæ ab ipso unquam creata fuerint vel creabuntur. — Nec poterit quisquam merito conqueri, *dominium Dei* intra nimis *angustos limites* hac explicatione coerceri; qua hoc unum dicitur, illius nullam partem consistere in potestate quicquam faciendi contra finem optimum, Bonum commune. *Idem pag. 345, 346.*

Contrà autem, *Hobbiana* resolutio *dominii Divini* in *potentiam ejus irresistibilem* adeo aperte ducit ad, &c. — ut mihi dubium non sit, illud ab eo fictum fuisse, Deoque attributum, in eum tantum finem, ut juri suo omnium in omnia patrocina-retur. *Id. pag. 344.*

Nos e contrario, fontem indicavimus, e quo demonstrari potest, *Justitiam universalem*, omnemq; adeo *Virtutem moralem*, quæ in Rectore requiritur, in *Deo* præ cæteris refulgere, *eadem planè methodo, qua homines ad eas excolendas obligari ostendemus.* *Id. pag. 347.*

fore proved) to have constant Regard: And (as a learned Prelate of our own * has excellently shewn, not barely his infinite Power, but the Rules of this eternal Law, are the true Foundation and the Measure of his Dominion over his Creatures. Now for the same Reason that *God* who hath no *Superior* to determine him, yet constantly directs all his own Actions by the eternal Rule of Justice and Goodness, 'tis evident all *Intelligent Creatures* in their several Spheres and Proportions, *ought* to obey the same Rule according to the Law of their Nature, even though it could be supposed separate from that additional Obligation, of its being the positive Will and Command of *God*. And doubtless there have been many Men in all Ages in many Parts of the heathen World, who not having Philosophy enough to collect from mere Nature any tolerably just and explicit Apprehensions concerning the *Attributes of God*, much less having been able to deduce from thence any clear and certain Knowledge of his *Will*, have yet had a very great Sense of *Right* and *Truth*, and been fully persuaded in their

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own Minds, of many unalterable Obligations of *Morality*. But this Speculation, though necessary to be taken Notice of in the distinct Order and Method of Discourse, is in itself too dry, and not of great Use to *Us*, who are abundantly assured that all moral Obligations are moreover the plain and declared Will of God; As shall be shewn particularly in its proper Place.

7. Lastly, *This Law of Nature* has its full obligatory Power, antecedent to all Consideration of any particular private and personal *Reward* or *Punishment*, annexed either by natural Consequence, or by positive Appointment, to the Observance or Neglect of it. This also is very evident: Because, if Good and Evil, Right and Wrong, Fitness and Unfitness of being practised, be (as has been shewn) originally, eternally, and necessarily, in the Nature of the Things themselves, 'tis plain that the View of *particular Rewards* or *Punishments*, which is only an After-consideration, and does not at all alter the Nature of Things, cannot be the original Cause of the Obligation of the Law, but is only an additional Weight to enforce the Practice of what Men were before obliged to by right Reason. There is no Man, who has any just Sense of the Difference between Good and Evil, but must needs acknowledge, that Virtue and Goodness
* are truly amiable, and to be chosen for their own Sakes and intrinsic Worth, though a Man had no Prospect of gaining any particular Advantage to himself, by the Practice of them: And that, on the contrary, Cruelty, Violence and Oppression, Fraud, Injustice, and all Manner of Wickedness, are of themselves hateful, and by all
P Means

The Law of Nature obligatory, antecedent to all Consideration of particular Rewards and Punishments.

* Dignæ itaq; sunt, quæ propter intrinsecam sibi perfectionem appetantur, etiam si nulla esset naturæ Lex, quæ illas imperaret. *Cumberland. de Leg. Nat. pag. 281.*

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δικαίος ἐστίν, ἔχ' ὃ μὴ
 ἄλλ' ὅτις ἀδικεῖν δυνάμεν
 μὴ βλάται.

Οὐδ' ὅς τὰ μικρὰ λαμβάνειν
 ἀπέσχει.

Ἄλλ' ὅς τὰ μεγάλα κρατερεῖ
 μὴ λαμβάνων,

ἔχειν δυνάμεν καὶ καρτεῖν
 ἀζημίως.

Οὐδ' ὅς γε ταῦτα πάντα δια-
 τηρεῖ μόνον,

Ἄλλ' ὅτις ἀδολον γνησίαν
 τ' ἔχων φύσιν,

εἶναι δίκαιον, κ' οὐ δοκεῖν
 εἶναι, θέλει.

Philemonis Fragmenta.

† Honestum id intelligi-
 mus, quod tale est, ut de-
 tracta omni utilitate, sine ullis
 præmiis fructibusque, per seip-
 sum possit jure laudari. *Cic.
 de Finib. 2.*

Atque hæc omnia propter
 se solum, ut nihil adjungatur
 emolumentum, petenda sunt. *Id.
 de Inventione lib. 2.*

Nihil est de quo minus du-
 bitari possit, quam & honesta
 expetenda per se, & eodem
 modo turpia per se esse fugi-
 enda. *Id. de Finib. lib. 3.*

‡ Jus & omne honestum,
 sua sponte est expetendum.
 Etenim omnes viri boni ip-
 sam æquitatem & jus ipsum
 amant. *Id. de Legib. lib. 1.*

Optimi quique permulta ob
 eam unam causam faciunt,
 quia decet, quia rectum, quia honestum est; etsi nullum consecuturum
 emolumentum vident. *Id. de Finib. lib. 2.*

¶ Satis enim nobis (si modo aliquid in philosophia profecimus) per-
 suasum esse debet, si omnes deos hominesque celare possimus, nihil tamen
 avare, nihil injuste, nihil libidinosè, nihil incontinentè esse faciendum.
Id. de Offic. lib. 3.

Si nemo sciturus, nemo ne suspicaturus quidem sit, quum aliquid divi-
 tiarum, potentiae, dominationis, libidinis causa feceris; si id diis homi-
 nibusque futurum sit semper ignotum, sisne facturus? *Id. ibid.*

Means to be avoided, even * tho'
 a Man had absolute Assurance,
 that he should bring no Manner
 of Inconvenience upon Himself
 by the Commission of any or
 all of these Crimes. This like-
 wise is excellently and admirably
 expressed by Cicero: *Virtue*, faith
 † he, is that, which, though no
Profit or Advantage whatsoever, was
to be expected to a Man's self from
the Practice of it, yet must without
all Controversy be acknowledged to
be truly desirable for its own Sake
alone. And accordingly ‡ all good
Men love Right and Equity, and do
many Things without any Prospect
of Advantage at all, merely because
they are Just and Right, and fit to
be done. On the contrary, Vice is
so odious in its own Nature, and
so fit to be avoided, even though no
Punishment was to ensue, that || no
Man, who has made any tolera-
ble Proficiency in Moral Philosophy,
can in the least Doubt, but, if he
was sure the Thing could be for ever
concealed intirely both from God
and Men, so that there should not be
the least Suspicion of its being ever
discovered, yet he ought not to do

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any Thing unjustly, covetously, wilfully, passionately, licentiously, or any Way wickedly.

Nay, * if a good Man had it in his Power to gain all his Neighbour's Wealth by the least Motion of his Finger, and was sure it would never be at all suspected either by God or Man; unquestionably he would think, he ought not to do it. And whoever wonders at this, has no Notion what it is to be really a good Man. Not † that any such Thing

is possible in Nature, that any Wickedness can be indeed concealed from God; But only, upon such a Supposition, the natural and necessary Difference between Justice and Injustice is made to appear more clearly and undeniably.

Thus far is clear. But now from hence it does *Yet it does not at all follow, either that a good Man ought to have no Respect to Rewards and Punishments, or that Rewards and Punishments are not absolutely necessary to maintain the Practice of Virtue and Righteousness in this present World.* 'Tis certain, indeed, that Virtue and Vice are eternally and necessarily different; and that the one truly deserves to be chosen for its own Sake, and the other ought by all Means to be avoided, though a Man was sure, for his own Particular, neither to gain nor lose any Thing by the Practice of either. And, if this was truly the State of Things in the World, certainly That Man must have a very corrupt Mind indeed, who could in the least doubt, or so much as once deliberate with himself, which he would chuse. But the Case does not stand thus. The Question Now in the general Practice of the World, supposing all Expectation of Rewards and Punishments set aside, will not be, whether

* Itaq; si vir bonus habeat hanc vim; ut, si digitis concrepuerit, possit in locupletum testamenta nomen ejus irrepere; hac vi non utatur, ne si exploratum quidem habeat id omnino neminem unquam suspicaturum. — Hoc qui admiratur, is se, quis sit vir bonus, nescire fatetur. *Idem de Offic. lib. 3.*

† Καὶ εἰ μὴ δυνατόν εἴη ταῦτα λαμβάνειν καὶ θεὸς καὶ ἄνθρωπος, ὅμως δούλον εἶναι, τοῦ λόγου ἕνεκα. ἵνα αὐτὴ δικαιοσύνη πρὸς ἀδικίαν αὐτὴν κριθεῖη. *Plato de Republ. lib. 10.*

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ther a Man would chuse Virtue for *its own Sake*, and avoid Vice : But the Practice of Vice is accompanied with great Temptations and Allurements of Pleasure and Profit ; and the Practice of Virtue is often threatened with great Calamities, Losses, and sometimes even with Death itself. And this alters the Question, and destroys the Practice of that which appears so reasonable in the whole Speculation, and introduces a Necessity of Rewards and Punishments. For though Virtue is unquestionably *worthy to be chosen for its own Sake*, even without any Expectation of Reward ; yet, it does not follow that it is therefore intirely *Self-sufficient*, and able to support a Man under all Kinds of Sufferings, and even Death itself, for its Sake, without any Prospect of future Recompence. Here therefore began the Error of the *Stoicks*, who taught, that the bare Practice of Virtue was itself the chief Good, and able of itself to make a Man happy under all the Calamities in the World. Their Defence, indeed, of the Cause of Virtue was very brave : They saw well, that its Excellency was intrinsic, and founded in the Nature of the Things themselves, and could not be altered by any outward Circumstances : That therefore Virtue must needs be desirable for its own Sake, and not merely for the Advantage it might bring along with it : And if so, then consequently neither could any external Disadvantage, which it might happen to be attended with, change the intrinsic Worth of the Thing itself, or ever make it cease to be truly desirable. Wherefore, in the Case of Sufferings and Death for the Sake of Virtue, not having any *certain* Knowledge of a future State of Reward (though the wisest of them did, indeed, hope for it, and think it highly *probable*) they were forced, that they might be consistent with their own Principles, to suppose the Practice of Virtue a sufficient Reward to itself in all Cases, and a full Compensation for all the Sufferings

Sufferings in the World. And accordingly they very bravely, indeed, taught, that the Practice of Virtue was not only * infinitely to be preferred before all the sinful Pleasures in the World, but also † that a Man ought without Scruple to chuse, if the Case was proposed to him, rather to undergo all possible Sufferings with Virtue, than to obtain all possible worldly Happiness by Sin. And the suitable Practice of some few of them, as of *Regulus* for Instance, who chose to die the cruelest Death that could be invented, rather than break his Faith with an Enemy, is, indeed, very wonderful, and to be admired. But yet, after all this, 'tis plain that the general Practice of Virtue in the World can never be supported upon this Foot. The Discourse is admirable, but it seldom goes further than mere Words: And the Practice of those few, who have acted accordingly, has not been imitated by the rest of the World. Men never will generally, and, indeed, 'tis not very reasonably to be expected they should, part with all the Comforts of Life, and even Life itself, without Expectation of any future Recompence. So that, if we suppose no future State of Rewards, it will follow, that God has indued Men with such Faculties, as put them under a Necessity of approving and chusing Virtue in the Judgment of their own Minds, and yet has not given them wherewith to support themselves in the

* Est autem unus dies bene & ex præceptis tuis actus, peccanti immortalitati antepponendus. *Cic. Tusc. Quæst.* 2. 5.

† Quæro si duo sint, quorum alter optimus vir, æquissimus, summa justitia, singulari fide; alter insigni scelere & audacia: Et si in eo sit errore civitas, ut bonum illum virum, sceleratum, facinorosum, nefarium putet; contra autem qui sit improbissimus, existimet esse summa probitate ac fide: proq; hac opinione omnium civium, bonus ille vir vexetur, rapiatur, manus ei denique auferantur, effodiantur oculi, damnetur, vinciatur, uratur, exterminetur, egeat; postremo, jure etiam optimo omnibus miserrimus esse videatur; contra autem ille improbus laudetur, colatur, ab omnibus diligatur, omnes ad eum honores, omnia imperia, omnes opes, omnes deniq; copię conferantur, vir deniq; optimus omnium æstimatione, & dignissimus omni fortuna judicetur: Quis tandem erit tam demens, qui dubitet utrum se esse malit? *Idem de Republ.* lib. 3. fragment.

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suitable and constant Practice of it. The Consideration of which inexplicable Difficulty ought to have led the Philosophers to a firm Belief and Expectation of a future State of Rewards and Punishments, without which their whole Scheme of Morality cannot be supported. And, because a Thing of such Necessity and Importance to Mankind was not more clearly, and directly, and universally made known, it might naturally have led them to some farther Consequences also, which I shall have Occasion particularly to deduce hereafter.

The manifold Absurdities of Mr. Hobbs's Doctrines, concerning the Original of Right, shewn in particular.

And now, from what has been said upon this Head, 'tis easy to see the Falsity and Weakness of Mr. Hobbs's Doctrines; That *there is no such Thing as Just and Unjust, Right and Wrong, originally in the Nature of Things*; That *Men in their natural State, antecedent to all Compacts, are not obliged to universal Benevolence, nor to any moral Duty whatsoever*; but *are in a State of War, and have every one a Right to do whatever he has Power to do*; And that, *in Civil Societies, it depends wholly upon positive Laws, or the Will of Governors, to define what shall be Just or Unjust*. The Contrary to all which having been already fully demonstrated, there is no Need of being large, in further disproving and confuting particularly these Assertions themselves. I shall therefore only mention a few Observations, from which some of the greatest and most obvious Absurdities of the chief Principles upon which Mr. Hobbs builds his whole Doctrine in this Matter, may most easily appear.

1. First then; The Ground and Foundation of Mr. Hobbs's Scheme is this; that * *All Men, being equal by Nature, and naturally desiring the same Things, have † every one a Right to every Thing*; are every one desirous

* Ab æqualitate Naturæ
eritur unicuique ea, quæ cupit,
acquirendi Spes. *Leviath.*
c. 13.

† Natura dedit unicuique

desirous to have absolute Dominion over all others, and may every One justly do whatever at any Time is in his Power, by violently taking from Others either their Possessions or Lives, to gain to himself that absolute Dominion. Now this is exactly the same Thing, as if a Man should affirm, that a Part is equal to the Whole, or that one Body can be present in a Thousand Places at once. For to say that one Man has a full Right to the same individual Things, which another Man at the same Time has a full Right to, is saying that two Rights may be * contradictory to each other, that is, that a Thing may be Right, at the same Time that 'tis confessed to be Wrong. For Example, If every Man has a Right to preserve his own Life, then † 'tis manifest I can have no Right to take any Man's Life away from him, unless he has first forfeited his own Right, by attempting to deprive me of mine. For, otherwise, it might be Right for me to do That, which at the same Time, because it could not be done but in Breach of another Man's Right, it could not be Right for me to do: Wich is the greatest Absurdity in the World. The true State of this Case therefore is plainly this: In Mr. Hobbs's State of Nature and Equality, every Man having an equal Right to preserve his own Life, 'tis evident every Man has a Right to an equal Proportion of all those Things which are either necessary or useful to Life. And consequently so far is it from being true, that any One has an original Right to possess All, that, on the contrary, whoever first Attempts,

jus in omnia. I
statu merè naturali,
quam homines ullis
sefe invicem obstrinxissent,
unicuiq; licebat facere quæ-
cunq; & in quoscunq; libebat;
& possidere, uti, frui omnibus,
quæ volebat & poterat. *De*
Cive, c. 1. § 10.

* Si impossibile sit singulis,
omnes & omnia sibimet subji-
cere; ratio quæ hunc finem
proponit singulis, qui uni tan-
tum contingere potest, sæpius
quam millies proponeret im-
possibile, & semel tantum pos-
sibile. *Cumberl. de Leg Nat.*
pag. 217.

† Nec potest cujusquam
jus seu libertas ab ulla lege
relicta, eo extendere, ut li-
ceat oppugnare ea, quæ aliis
eadem Lege imperantur faci-
enda. *Id. pag. 219.*

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without the *Consent* of his Fellows, and except it be for some *publick Benefit*, to take to himself more than his *Proportion*, is the Beginner of Iniquity, and the Author of all succeeding Mischief.

2. To avoid this Absurdity therefore, Mr. *Hobbs* is forced to assert in the next Place, that since every Man has confessedly a Right to preserve his own Life, and consequently to do every Thing that is necessary to preserve it; and since, in the State of

Nature, Men will necessarily have

* *perpetual Jealousies and Suspensions of each other's Incroaching*; therefore just Precaution gives every one a Right to † endeavour, for his own security, to prevent, oppress, and destroy all others, either by secret Artifice or open Violence, as it shall happen at any Time to be in his Power, as being the || only certain Means of Self-preservation. But this is even a plainer Absurdity, if possible, than the former,

For (besides that, according to Mr. *Hobbs's* Principles, Men, before positive Compacts, may justly do what Mischief they please, even without the Pretence of *Self-preservation*) what can be more Ridiculous than to imagine a *War of All Men against All* the directest and certainest Means of the *Preservation* of all? Yes, says he, because it leads Men to a Necessity of entering into *Compact* for each other's Security. But then, to make these *Compacts* Obligatory, he is forced (as I shall presently observe more particularly) to recur to an * antecedent *Law of Nature*: And this destroys all that he had before said. For the same *Law of Nature* which obliges Men to *Fidelity*, after having made a Compact, will unavoidably, upon all the same Accounts, be found to oblige them, before all Compacts, to *Contentment* and

* *Omnium adversus omnes perpetuæ Suspiciones. — Bellum omnium in Omnes. De Cive, c. 1. § 12.*

† *Spes unicuique securitatis conservationisque suæ in eo sita est, ut viribus artibusque propriis proximum suum vel palam vel ex insidiis præoccupare possit. Ibid. c. 5. § 1.*

|| *Securitatis viam meliorem habet nemo Anticipatione. Leviath. c. 13.*

* See *De Cive, c. 3. § 4.*

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and mutual *Benevolence*, as the readiest and certainest Means to the Preservation and Happiness of them All. 'Tis true, Men, by entering into *Compacts* and making *Laws*, agree to compel one another to do what perhaps the mere Sense of Duty, however really Obligatory in the highest Degree, would not, without such *Compacts*, have Force enough of itself to hold them to in Practice: And so *Compacts* must be acknowledged to be *in Fact* a great Addition and Strengthening of Mens Security. But this Compulsion makes no Alteration in the *Obligation itself*, and only shews, that That *intirely lawless* State, which Mr. *Hobbs* calls the *State of Nature*, is by no Means truly *Natural*, or in any Sense suitable to the Nature and Faculties of Man; but, on the contrary, is a State of extremely *Unnatural and Intolerable Corruption*: As I shall presently prove more fully from some other Considerations.

3. Another notorious Absurdity and Inconsistency in Mr. *Hobbs's* Scheme is this: That he all along supposes Some particular Branches of the Law of Nature (which he thinks necessary for the Foundation of some Parts of his own Doctrine) to be originally Obligatory from the bare Reason of Things; at the same Time that he denies and takes away innumerable others, which have plainly in the Nature and Reason of Things the same Foundation of being Obligatory as the former, and without which the Obligation of the former can never be solidly made out and defended. Thus, he supposes that in the State of Nature, before any Compact be made, every * *Man's own Will is his only Law*; that † *nothing a Man can do, is Unjust*; and that

* *Unicuique licebat facere quæcunque libebat. De Cive, c. 1. § 10.*

† *Consequens est, ut Nihil dicendum sit Injustum. Nomina Justi & Injusti locum*

in hac conditione non habent. Leviath. cap. 13.

* *whatever*

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Ex his sequitur, Injuriam nemini fieri posse, nisi ei quocum initur pactum. — Siquis alicui noceat, quocum nihil pactus est; *damnum* ei infert, non *Injuriam*. — Etenim si is qui *damnum* recipit, *injuriā* expostularet; is qui fecit sic diceret, *quid tu mihi? quare facerem ego tuo potius, quam meo libitu?* &c. In qua ratione, ubi nulla intercesserunt pacta, non video quid sit quod possit reprehendi. *De Cive, c. 3. §. 4.*

† Prima & fundamentalis Lex Naturæ est, quærendam esse pacem, ubi haberi potest, &c. *De Cive, c. 2. §. 2.*

‡ See *De Cive, cap. 2. §. 3.*

|| Ex his sequitur, Injuriam nemini fieri posse, &c.

* *whatever Mischief one Man does to another, is no Injury nor Injustice; neither has the Person, to whom the Mischief is done, how great soever it be, any just Reason to complain of Wrong; (I think it may here reasonably be presumed, that if Mr. Hobbs had lived in such a State of Nature, and had happened to be himself the Suffering Party, he would in this Case have been of another Opinion :) And yet at the same Time he supposes, that, in the same State of Nature, Men are by all Means obliged † to seek Peace, and ‡ to enter into Compacts to remedy the fore-mentioned Mischiefs. Now if Men are obliged by the original Reason*

and Nature of Things to seek Terms of Peace, and to get out of the pretended natural State of War, as soon as they can, how come they not to be obliged originally, by the same Reason and Nature of Things, to live from the Beginning in universal Benevolence, and avoid entering into the State of War at all? He must needs confess they would be obliged to do so, did not Self-preservation necessitate them every Man to War upon others: But this cannot be true of the first Aggressor, whom yet Mr. Hobbs, in the || Place now cited, vindicates from being guilty of any Injustice: And

therefore herein he unavoidably contradicts himself. Thus again, in most Instances of Morality, he supposes Right and Wrong, Just and Unjust to have no Foundation in the Nature of Things, but to depend intirely on positive Laws; that

* the

and Revealed RELIGION.

* the Rules or Distinctions of Good and Evil, Honest and Dishonest, are mere civil Constitutions; and whatever the Chief Magistrate Commands, is to be accounted Good; whatever he Forbids, Evil: that † 'tis the Law of the Land only, which makes Robbery to be Robbery, or Adultery to be Adultery: that ‡ the Commandments, to Honour our Parents, to do no Murder, not to commit Adultery, and all the other Laws of God and Nature, are no further obligatory, than the Civil Power shall think fit to make them so; nay, that || where the Supreme Authority commands Men to worship God by an Image or Idol, in Heathen Countries, (for in this Instance he cautiously excepts Christian ones ('tis lawful and their Duty to do it; and (agreeably, as a natural Consequence to all This,) that § 'tis Mens positive Duty to obey the Commands of the Civil Power in all Things, even in Things clearly and

tionibus omnibus circa meum, tuum, suum, alienum, absolutè obedirent. *De Cive*, c. 17. § 10.

|| Si quærat^r an obediendum civitati sit, si imperetur Deum colere sub Imagine, coram iis qui id fieri honorificum esse putant; certè faciendum est. *De Cive*, c. 15, §. 18.

§ Universaliter & in omnibus obedire obligamur. *De Cive*, c. 14. §. 10.

Doctrina alia, quæ Obedientiæ civili repugnat, est, quicquid faciat Civis quicunque contra Conscientiam suam, peccatum est. *Leviath.* c. 29.

Opinio eorum qui docent, peccare subditos, quoties mandata Principum suorum, quæ sibi Injusta videntur esse, exsequuntur; & erronea est, & inter eas numeranda quæ obedientiæ civili adversantur. *De Cive*, c. 12. § 2.

* *Regulas boni & mali, & injusti, honesti & inhonesti, esse leges civiles; ideoque quod legislator præceperit, id pro bono; quod vetuerit, id pro malo habendum esse. De Cive*, c. 12. § 1.

Quod Actio *justa vel injusta* sit, a jure imperantis provenit. Reges legitimi quæ imperant, *justa faciunt imperando; quæ vetant, vetando faciunt injusta. De Cive*, c. 12. § 1. [In which Section 'tis worth observing, how he ridiculously Interprets those Words of Solomon, (*Dabis servo tuo cor docile, ut possit Discernere inter bonum & malum,*) to signify, not his Understanding or Discerning, but his Decreeing what shall be good, and what evil.]

† Si tamen Lex civilis jubeat invadere aliquid, non est illud *Furtum, Adulterium, &c. De Cive*, c. 14. § 10.

‡ Sequitur ergo, legibus illis, non Occides, non Mæchabere, non Furabere, Parentes honorabis, nihil aliud præcepisse Christum, quam ut cives & subditi suis Principibus & summis Imperatoribus in quæf-

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directly against their Conscience; (that is, that 'tis their positive Duty to do That, which at the same Time they know plainly 'tis their Duty not to

* Concludendum est, Legem Naturæ semper & ubiq; obligare in *Foro interno*, sive *conscientia*; non semper in *Foro externo*; sed tum solummodo, cum securè id fieri possit. *De Cive*, c. 3.

† Quæ si tanta potentia est stultorum sententiis atque iussis, ut eorum suffragiis rerum natura vertatur; cur non sanciant, ut quæ *mala perniciosaq;* sunt, habeantur pro *bonis ac salutaribus*? Cicero de Legib. lib. 1.

† *De Cive*, that † *the Civil Authority is to judge of all Opinions and c. 6. § 11. Doctrines whatsoever; to * determine Questions Philosophical, Mathematical; and, because indeed the*
 * *Ibid. c. 17. § 12. Signification of Words is Arbitrary, even † Arithmetical ones also; as, whether a Man shall presume to affirm that Two and Three make Five or not: And yet at the same Time, Some particular Things, which it would either have been too flagrantly scandalous for him to have made depending upon human*

† Neque enim an honorificè de Deo sentiendum sit, neque an sit amandus, timendus, colendus, dubitari potest. Sunt enim hæc Religionum per omnes gentes communia. *De Homine*, cap. 14.

|| Si is qui summum habet imperium, seipsum, imperantem dico, interficere alicui imperet; non tenetur. Neque Parentem, &c. cum filius mori quam vivere infamis atque exosus malit. Et alii casus sunt, cum mandata factu inhonesta sunt, &c. *De Cive*, c. 6. § 13.

do:) * *Keeping up indeed always in their own Minds an inward Desire to observe the Laws of Nature and Conscience, but not being bound to observe them in their outward Actions, except when 'tis safe so to do: He might as well have said, that Human Laws and Constitutions have † Power to make Light be Darkness, and Darkness Light; to make Sweet be Bitter, and Bitter Sweet: And indeed, as one Absurdity will naturally lead a Man into another, he does say something very like it; namely,*

Laws; as that † God is to be Loved, Honoured, and Adored; that || a Man ought not to Murder his Parents; and the like: Or else, which were of Necessity to be supposed for the Foundation of

his

his own Scheme; as that * *Compacts ought to be faithfully performed, and Obedience † to be duly paid to Civil Powers*: The Obligation of *These Things* he is forced to deduce intirely from the internal Reason and Fitnefs of the Things themselves, ‡ *antecedent to, independent upon, and unalterable by all Human Constitutions* whatsoever. In which Matter, he is guilty of the grossest Absurdity and Inconsistency that can be. For if those greatest and strongest of all our Obligations; to *Love and Honour God*, for Instance; or, to *perform Compacts faithfully*; depend not at all on any Human Constitution, but must of Necessity (to avoid making Obligations reciprocally depend on each other in a Circle) be confessed to arise originally from, and be founded in, the eternal Reason and unalterable Nature and Relations of Things themselves, and the Nature and Force of these Obligations be sufficiently clear and evident, so that he who || *Dishonours God*, or § *wilfully breaks his Faith*, is (according to *Mr. Hobbs's* own Reasoning) guilty of as great an Absurdity in *Practice*, and of as plainly contradicting the right Reason of his own Mind, as he who in a *Dispute* is reduced to a Necessity of asserting something inconsistent with itself; And the original Obligation to these Duties can from

pacto suo ante promiserat, *Injuriam* facit: neq; minus in contradictionem incidit, quam qui in Scholis reducitur ad *Absurdum*. — Est itaq; *Injuria Absurditas* quædam in conversatione; sicut *Absurditas Injuria* quædam est in disputatione. *De Cive*, c. 3. §. 3.

* Lex naturalis standum esse, five Fidei servandam esse. *De Cive*, c. 3. §. 1.

† Lex naturalis omnes leges civiles jubet observari. Ibid. c. 14. §. 10.

‡ Legem Civilem, quæ non fit lata in contumeliam Dei (*cujus respectu ipsæ Civitates non sunt sui juris, nec dicuntur leges ferre, &c.*) *De Cive*, c. 14. §. 10.

¶ *Pacti* violatio, &c. See *De Cive*, c. 3. §. 3.

|| See *De Cive*, c. 14. §. 10.

§ Est Similitudo quædam inter id, quod in vita communi vocatur *Injuria*, & id, quod in Scholis solet appellari *Absurdum*. Quemadmodum enim is, qui argumentis cogitur ad negationem assertionis quam prius asseruerat, dicitur redigi ad *Absurdum*: eodem modo is, qui præ animi impotentia facit vel omittit id quod se non facturum vel non omitturum

hence

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ence only be distinctly deduced: Then, for the same Reason, all the Other Duties likewise of natural Religion, such as *universal Benevolence, Justice, Equity*, and the like (which I have before proved to receive in like Manner their *Power of obliging*, from the eternal Reason and Relations of Things) must needs be obligatory, antecedent to any Consideration of *positive Compact*, and unalterably and independently on all *Human Constitutions* whatsoever: And consequently Mr. *Hobbs's* whole Scheme, (both of a State of Nature at first, wherein there was no such Thing as Right or Wrong, Just or Unjust, at all; and of these Things depending afterwards, by virtue of Compact, wholly and absolutely on the positive and arbitrary Determination of the Civil Power;) falls this Way intirely to the Ground, by his having been forced to suppose *some particular* Things obligatory, originally, and in their own Nature. On the contrary, If the Rules of Right and Wrong, Just and Unjust, have *none of them* any obligatory Force in the State of Nature, *antecedent* to positive Compact, Then, for the same Reason, neither will they be of any Force *after* the Compact, so as to afford Men any certain and real Security, (excepting only what may arise from the *Compulsion of Laws*, and *Fear of Punishment*, which therefore, it may well be supposed, is all that Mr. *Hobbs* really Means at the Bottom.) For, if there be no Obligation of *Just* and *Right* antecedent to the *Compact*, then *Whence* arises the Obligation of the *Compact* itself, on which he supposes all other Obligations to be founded? If, *before* any Compact was made, it was no Injustice for a Man to take away the Life of his Neighbour,

* Ex his sequitur, injuriam nemini fieri posse, nisi ei quo cum initur pactum. De Cive,

c. 3. § 4. [Which whole Section highly deserves to be read and well considered, as containing the Secret of Mr. *Hobbs's* whole Scheme.]

not for his own Preservation, but merely to satisfy an * arbitrary Humour or Pleasure, and without

any

any Reason or Provocation at all; How comes it to be an Injustice, *after* he has made a Compact, to break and neglect it? Or *What* is it that makes *breaking one's Word* to be a greater and more unnatural Crime, than *killing a Man merely for no other Reason, but because no positive Compact has been made to the contrary?* So that, * this Way also, Mr. *Hobbs's* whole Scheme is intirely destroyed.

4. That State, which Mr. *Hobbs* calls the *State of Nature*, is not in any Sense a Natural State, but a State of the greatest, most unnatural, and most intolerable *Corruption*, that can be imagined. For *Reason*, which is the proper Nature of Man, can never (as has been before shewn) lead Men to any Thing else than *universal Love and Benevolence*: And *Wars, Hatred, and Violence*, can never arise but from extreme *Corruption*. A Man may sometimes, 'tis true, in his own Defence be necessitated, in Compliance with the Laws of Nature and Reason, to make War upon his Fellows: But the first Aggressors, who upon Mr. *Hobbs's* Principles, (that all Men † have a natural *Will* to hurt each other, and that every one in the State of Nature has a ‡ *Right* to do whatever he has a *Will* to :) The first Aggressors, I say, who upon these Principles assault and violently spoil as many as they are superior to in Strength, without any Regard to Equity or Proportion; these can never, by any Colour whatsoever, be
excused

* Itaq; patet quod, si Hob-
biana ratiocinatio esset valida,
omnis final *Legum Civilium*
obligatio collaberetur; nec
aliter fieri potest quin earum
vis labefactetur ab omnibus
principiis, quæ Legum natu-
ralium vim tollunt aut minu-
unt; quoniam in his funda-
tur & regiminis civilis aucto-
ritas ac securitas, & legum
a civitatibus latarum vigor.
Cumberland. de Leg. Nat. pag.
303.

Etiam extra regimen civile,
a malis omnigenis simul con-
sideratis tutior erit, qui actibus
externis Leges Naturæ con-
stantissimè observabit; quam
qui, juxta doctrinam Hobbi-
anam, vi aut insidiis alios
omnes conando præoccupare,
securitatem sibi quæfiverit. *Id.*
pag. 304.

† *Voluntas lædendi* omni-
bus inest in statu Naturæ. *De*
Cive, c. 1. § 4.

‡ In statu naturali, unicuiq;
licebat facere quæcunque &
in quoscunque *libebat*. *Ibid.*
§ 10.

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existimat contra
meri, hominibus vio-
lantis; quid cum eo disse-
ras, qui omnino hominem ex
homine tollat? *Cic. de Offic.*
lib. 3.

† Τάδε δὲ δίκαια οὐδ' εἶναι
τοπαράπαν φύσει· — γιγνόμενα
τέχνη καὶ τοῖς νόμοις, ἀλλ' οὐ
δὴ τινι φύσει· — Φασκόντων
εἶναι τὸ δίκαιότατον, ὃ, τι τις ἄν
ἡκᾷ βιαζόμενος· ὅθεν ἀσεβείαι
τε καὶ σάσεις· — ὅσην λῶβην
ἀνθρώπων νέων δημοσία πόλεσι
τε καὶ ἰδίοις οἰκοῖς. *Plato de*
Leg. lib. 10.

‡ Homines Libertatis &
Dominii per naturam amatores.
Leviath. c. 17.

Nemini dubium esse debet,
quin avidius ferrentur homi-
nes natura sua, si metus abes-
set, ad *Dominationem* quàm ad
Societatem. *De Cive, cap. 1.*
§ 2.

excused from having * *utterly di-vested themselves of Human Nature*, and having † introduced into the World, contrary to all the Laws of Nature and Reason, the greatest Calamities, and most unnatu-ral Confusion, that Mankind, by the highest Abuse of their natural Powers and Faculties, are capable of falling under. Mr. *Hobbs* pre-tends indeed, that one of the first and most natural Principles of human Life is ‡ a Desire necessa-riely arising in every Man's Mind, of having Power and Dominion over Others; and that this natu-rally impels Men to use Force and Violence to obtain it. But nei-ther is it true, that Men, follow-ing the Dictates of Reason and uncorrupted Nature, desire disproportionate Power and Dominion over others; neither, if it was natu-ral to desire such Power, would it at all follow, that it was agreeable to Nature to use violent and hurtful Means to obtain it. For since the only natural and good Reason to desire Power and Do-minion (more than what is necessary for every Man's Self-preservation) is, that the Possessor of such Power may have a larger Compass, and greater Abilities and Opportunities of doing Good, (as is evident from God's Exercise of perfectly *Absolute Power*;) 'tis plain that no Man, obeying the un-corrupted Dictates of Nature and Reason, can de-fire to increase his Power by such destructive and pernicious Methods, the Prevention of which is *the only good Reason* that makes the Power itself truly desirable. All Violence therefore, and War, are

are plainly the Effects, not of natural Desires, but of unnatural and extreme Corruption. And this Mr. Hobbs himself unwarily proves against himself, by those very Arguments, whereby he endeavours to prove, that War and Contention is more *natural* to Men, than to Bees or Ants. For his Arguments on this Head are all drawn from Mens using themselves (as the Animals he is speaking of, cannot do) to * *Strive about Honours and Dignities, 'till the Contention grows up into Hatred, Seditions, and Wars; to † separate each one his private Interest from the Public, and value himself highly above others, upon getting and engrossing to himself more than his Proportion of the Things of Life; ‡ to find Fault with each other's Management, and, thro' Self-conceit, bring in continual Innovation and Distractions; to || impose one upon another, by Lies, Falsifying, and Deceit, calling Good Evil, and Evil Good; to ** grow envious at the Prosperity of others, or proud and domineering, when themselves are in Ease and Plenty; and to †† keep up tolerable Peace and Agreement among themselves merely by artificial Compacts, and the Compulsion of Laws.* All which Things are so far from being truly the *Natural* Effects and Result of Mens Reason and other Faculties; that

* Homines inter se de Honoribus & Dignitatibus perpetuo contendunt; sed Animalia illa [Apes & Formicæ] non item. Itaq; inter Homines Invidia, Odium, Bellum, &c. *Leviath. c. 17.*

† Inter Animalia illa, Bonum publicum & privatum idem est. — Homini autem in bonis propriis nihil tam jucundum est, quam quod alienis sunt majora. *Ibid.*

‡ Animantia quæ rationem non habent, nullum defectum vident, vel videre se putant, in administratione suarum rerum publicarum. Sed in multitudine Hominum, plurimi sunt qui præ cæteris sapere existimantes, conantur res novare; Et diversi novatores innovant diversis modis; id quod est distractio & bellum civile. *De Cive, c. 5. § 5.*

|| Animantia illa verborum arte illa carent, qua homines alii aliis videri faciunt Bonum Malum, & Malum Bonum; Magnum Parvum, & Parvum Magnum. *Leviath. c. 17.*

** Animalia bruta, quamdiu bene sibi est, cæteris non invident: Homo autem tum maxime molestus est, quando otio opibusq; maximè abundat. *Ibid.*

†† Consensio creaturarum illarum brutarum, naturalis est; hominum pactitia tantum, id est, artificiosa. *De Cive, c. 5. § 5.*

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On the contrary, they are evidently some of the grossest Abuses and most *unnatural* Corruptions thereof, that any one, who was arguing on the opposite Side of the Question, could easily have chosen to have instanced in.

5. Lastly : That chief and principal Argument, which is one of the main Foundations of Mr. *Hobbs's*

and his Followers System ; namely, that * *God's* irresistible Power is the *only Foundation* of his *Dominion*, and the *only Measure* of his *Right* over his Creatures ; and, consequently, † that every Other Being has just so much *Right* as it has *natural Power* ; that is, that 'tis naturally *Right* for every Thing to do whatever it has *Power* to do : This Argument, I say, is of all his others the most notoriously false and absurd : As may sufficiently appear, (besides what has been ‡ already said, of *God's* Other Perfections being || as much the Measure of his *Right*, as his *Power* is) from this single Consideration : Suppose the *Devil*, (for when Men run into extreme impious Assertions, they must be answered with suitable Suppositions ;) Suppose, I say, such a Being as we conceive the *Devil* to be ; of extreme Malice, Cruelty, and Iniquity ; was indued with supreme absolute Power, and made Use of it only to render the World as miserable as was possible, in the most cruel, arbitrary, and unequal Manner that can be imagined ; Would it not follow undeniably, upon Mr. *Hobbs's* Scheme ; since *Dominion* is founded in *Power*, and *Power* is the Measure of *Right*, and consequently *Absolute Power* gives *Absolute Right* ;

* Regni Divini naturalis Jus derivatur ab eo, quod *Divinæ potentia resistere impossibile est*. Leviath c. 31.

In regno naturali, regnandi & puniendi eos qui leges suas violant, jus Deo est *a sola potentia irresistibili*. De Cive, c. 15. § 5.

Iis quorum Potentiæ resisti non potest, & per consequens Deo omnipotenti, jus Dominandi ab *ipsa potentia* derivatur. *Ibid.*

† Nam quoniam Deus jus ad omnia habet ; & jus Dei nihil aliud est quam ipsa Dei potentia ; hinc sequitur, unamquamq; rem naturalem tantum juris ex natura habere, quantum potentia habet. *Spinoz. de Monarch. cap. 2.* [See also *Tractat. Theolog. politic. cap. 16.*]

‡ Page 69, 70.

|| See *Cumberland. de Leg. Naturæ*, locis supra citatis.

Right; that such a Government as this would not only be as much of Necessity indeed to be submitted to, but also, that it would be as *Just* and *Right*, and * *with as little Reason to be complained of*, as is the present Government of the World in the Hands of the *Ever-blessed and infinitely Good God*, whose Love, and Goodness, and tender Mercy appear everywhere over all his Works.

* See Hobbs de Cive, c. 3. §. 4.

Here Mr. Hobbs, as an *unanswerable* Argument in Defence of his Assertion, urges, that † the only Reason why Men are bound to obey God, is plainly nothing but *Weakness* or *Want of Power*; because, if they themselves were All-powerful, 'tis manifest they could not be under any Obligation to obey; and consequently *Power* would give them an undoubted *Right* to do what they pleased: That is to say, If Men were not created and dependent Beings, 'tis true they could not indeed be obliged to the *proper Relative Duty of created and dependent Beings*, viz. to obey the Will and Command of Another in Things *Positive*. But from their Obligation to the Practice of *Moral Virtues*, of Justice, Righteousness, Equity, Holiness, Purity, Goodness, Beneficence, Faithfulness, and Truth, from which Mr. Hobbs fellaciously in this Argument, and most impiously in his whole Scheme, endeavours ‡ to discharge them; from this they could not be discharged by any Addition of Power whatsoever: Because the Obligation to these Things is not as the Obligation to obey in Things of

† Quod si jus regnandi habeat Deus ab Omnipotentia sua, manifestum est Obligationem ad præstandum ipsi obedientiam, incumbere hominibus propter imbecillitatem. [To explain which, he adds in his Note;] Si cui durum hoc videbitur, illum rogo ut tacita cogitatione considerare velit, si essent duo Omnipotentes, uter utri obedire obligaretur. Confitebitur, credo, neutrum neutri obligari. Hoc si verum est, verum quoque est quod posui, homines ideo Deo subiectos esse, quia omnipotentes non sunt. De Cive, c. 15. § 7.

‡ Ut enim omittam vim & naturam Deorum; ne homines quidem censetis, nisi imbecilli essent, futuros beneficos & benignos fuisse. Cic. de Nat. Deor. lib. 1.

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arbitrary and positive Constitution, founded only in the Weakness, Subjection, and Dependency of the *Persons* obliged ; but also and chiefly in the eternal and unchangeable Nature and Reason of the *Things* themselves. For these Things are the Law of *God himself*, not only to his *Creatures*, but also to *Himself*, as being the Rule of all his own Actions in the Government of the World.

I have been the longer upon this Head, because *Moral Virtue* is the Foundation and the Sum, the Essence and the Life of all true Religion : For the Security whereof, all positive Institution was principally designed : For the Restoration whereof, all revealed Religion was ultimately intended : And inconsistent wherewith, or in Opposition to which, all Doctrines whatsoever, supported by what Pretence of Reason or Authority soever, are as certainly and necessarily false, as *God* is true.

II. *Though these eternal moral Obligations are indeed of themselves incumbent on all rational Beings, even antecedent to the Consideration of their being the positive Will and Command of God ; yet, that which most strongly confirms, and in Practice most effectually and indispensably inforces them upon us, is this, that both from the Perfections of God, and the Nature of Things, and from several other collateral Considerations, it appears, that, as God is himself necessarily Just and Good in the Exercise of his infinite Power in the Government of the whole World, so he cannot but likewise positively Require, that all his rational Creatures should in their Proportion be so too, in the Exercise of each of their Powers in their several and respective Spheres. That is, As these eternal moral Obligations are really in perpetual Force, merely from their own Nature, and the abstract Reason of Things ; so also they are moreover the express and unalterable Will, Command, and Law of*
God

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God to his Creatures, which he cannot but expect should, in Obedience to his Supreme Authority, as well as in Compliance with the natural Reason of Things, be regularly and constantly observed thro' the whole Creation.

This Proposition is very evident, and has little Need of being particularly proved.

For 1st. The same Reasons which prove to us *That moral Duties are the positive Will and Command of God, proved from the Consideration of the Divine Attributes.* that God must of Necessity be himself infinitely Holy, and Just, and Good, manifestly prove, that it must also be his Will, that all his Creatures should be so likewise, according to the Proportions and Capacities of their several Natures. *That* there are eternal and necessary Differences of Things, Agreements and Disagreements, Proportions and Disproportions, Fitneses and Unfitneses of Things, absolutely in their own Nature, has been before largely demonstrated. *That*, with Regard to these fixed and certain Proportions and Fitneses of Things, the Will of God, which can neither be influenced by any external Power, nor imposed upon by any Error or Deceit, constantly and necessarily Determines itself to chuse always what in the whole is Best and Fittest to be done, according to the unalterable Rules of Justice, Equity, Goodness, and Truth, has likewise been already proved. *That* the same Considerations *Ought* also regularly to determine the Wills of all Subordinate Rational Beings to act in constant Conformity to the same eternal Rules, has in like Manner been shewn before. It remains therefore only to prove, that these very same moral Rules, which are thus *of themselves* really obligatory, as being the necessary Result of the unalterable Reason and Nature of Things, are moreover the positive *Will and Command of God* to all rational Creatures: And consequently, that the wilful Transgression or Neglect of them is as truly an insolent Contempt of the Authority of God, as 'tis an absurd Confounding of the natural Reasons and Proportions of Things. Now this also plainly follows from what has been

already

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already laid down. For the same *absolute Perfection* of the Divine Nature, which (as has been before shewn) makes us certain that God must *Himself* be of Necessity infinitely Holy, Just, and Good, makes it equally certain, that he cannot possibly approve Iniquity in *Others*. And the same *Beauty*, the same *Excellency*, the same *Weight and Importance* of the Rules of everlasting Righteousness, with Regard to which God is always pleased to make those Rules the Measure of all his *Own* Actions, prove it impossible but he must likewise will and desire, that all rational Creatures should proportionably make them the Measure of *Theirs*. Even among *Men*, there is no earthly Father, but, in those Things which he esteems his own Excellencies, desires and expects to be imitated by his Children. How much more is it necessary that *God*, who is infinitely far from being subject to such Passions and Variableness as frail Men are, and who has an infinitely tenderer and heartier Concern for the Happiness of his Creatures, than mortal Men can have for the Welfare of their Posterity, must desire to be imitated by his Creatures in those Perfections, which are the Foundation of his own unchangeable Happiness? In the Exercise of his Supreme *Power*, we *cannot* imitate him: In the Extent of his unerring *Knowledge*, we *cannot* attain to any Similitude with him. We cannot at all *Thunder with a Voice like Him*, nor are we able to search out and comprehend the least Part of the Depth of his unfathomable *Wisdom*. But his

Job xl. 9. *Holiness* and *Goodness*, his *Justice*, *Righteousness*, and *Truth*; these Things we *can* understand; in these Things we *can* imitate him; nay, we cannot approve ourselves to him as obedient Children, if we do not imitate him therein. If God be himself essentially of infinite *Holiness* and *Purity*, (as, from the Light of Nature, 'tis of all Things most manifest that he is) it follows, that 'tis impossible but he must likewise be *of purer Eyes, than to behold* with

Approbation

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Approbation any Manner of *Impurity* in his Creatures; and consequently it must needs be his Will, that they should All (according to the Measure of their frail and finite Nature) be *Holy as he is Holy*. If God is himself a Being of infinite *Justice, Righteousness, and Truth*, it must needs be his Will, that all rational Creatures, whom he has created after his own Image, to whom he has communicated some Resemblance of his Divine Perfections, and whom he has indued with excellent Powers and Faculties to enable them to distinguish between Good and Evil, should imitate him in the Exercise of those glorious Attributes, by conforming all their Actions to the eternal and unalterable Law of Righteousness. If God is himself a Being of infinite *Goodness, making his Sun to rise on the Evil* Mat. v. *and on the Good, and sending Rain on the Just and on* 45. *the Unjust; having never left himself wholly without* Acts xiv. *Witness, but always doing Good, giving Men Rain from* 17. *Heaven and fruitful Seasons, and filling their Hearts with Food and Gladness:* It cannot but be his Will, that all reasonable Creatures should, by mutual Love and Benevolence, permit and assist each other to enjoy in particular the several Effects and Blessings of the Divine universal Goodness. Lastly, if God is himself a Being of infinite *Mercy and Compassion*, as 'tis plain he bears long with Men before he punishes them for their *Wickedness*, and often freely forgives them his *ten thousand Talents*; it must need be his Will, that they Mat. xviii. 24, 28. *should forgive one another their hundred Pence;* Luke vi. 36. *being merciful one to another, as he is merciful to* Mat. xi. 23. *them all, and having Compassion each on his Fellow-Servants, as God has Pity on Them.* Thus, from the *Attributes* of God, natural Reason leads Men to the Knowledge of his *Will*: All the same Reasons and Arguments, which discover to Men the *natural Fitnesses or Unfitnesses of Things*, and the *necessary Perfections or Attributes of God*, proving equally at

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principem Legem illam
& ultimam, *mentem esse omnia*
ratione aut cogentis aut ve-
tantis Dei. Cic. *de Legib.*
lib. 2.

Quæ vis non modo senior
est quam ætas populorum &
civitatum, sed *æqualis* illius
cælum atque terras tuentis &
regentis Dei. Neque enim
esse Mens Divina sine ratione
potest, nec ratio divina non
hanc vim *in rectis pravisque*
sancendis habere. *Ibid.*

† Vis Deos propitiare?
Bonus esto. Satis illos coluit,
qui imitatus est. Senec. *Epist.*
96.

Καὶ γὰρ δεινὸν ἂν εἴη, εἰ πρὸς
τὰ δῶρα καὶ τὰς θυσίας ἀπο-
βλέψουσιν ἡμῶν οἱ θεοὶ, ἀλλὰ μὴ
πρὸς τὴν ψυχὴν, ἃν τις ὅσι
καὶ δίκαιον ὦν τυγχάνῃ. Πολλῶ
γε μᾶλλον οἶμαι, ἢ πρὸς τὰς
πολυτελεῖς ταῦτας πομπὰς τε
καὶ θυσίας. *Plato in Alcibi-*
ade, 2.

Colitur autem, non tauro-
rum optimis corporibus con-
trucidatis, nec auro argenteo,
suspensio, nec in thesauros
stipe infusa; sed *pia & recta*
voluntate. Senec. *Epist.* 116.

the same Time, that * That which
is truly the *Law of Nature*, or the
Reason of Things, is in like Manner
the *Will of God*. And from hence
the Soberest and most Intelligent
Persons among the Heathens, in
all Ages, very rightly and wisely
concluded, that the best and cer-
tainest Part of Natural Religion,
which was of the greatest Impor-
tance, and wherein was the least
Danger of their being mistaken,
was † to *imitate* the moral Attri-
butes of God, by a Life of Ho-
liness, Righteousness and Charity:
Whereas, in the *External* Part of
their Worship, there was nothing
but Uncertainty and Doubtful-
ness; it being absolutely impos-
sible, without express Revelation,
to discover what, in that Particu-
lar, they might be secure would
be truly acceptable to God.

This Method of deducing the
Will of God, from his *Attributes*,
is of all others the best and
clearest, the certainest and most
universal, that the Light of Na-
ture affords. Yet there are also

(as I said) some other collateral Considerations,
which help to prove and confirm the same Thing,
namely, that all moral Obligations, arising from
the Nature and Reason of Things, are likewise the
positive Will and Command of God. As

And from
the Consi-
deration of
the Nature
of God's
Creation.

2. This appears in some Measure from the Con-
sideration of God's *Creation*. For God, by *Creating*
Things, manifests it to be his Will, that Things
should be what they Are. And as Providence won-
derfully

derfully preserves Things in their present State, and all necessary Agents, by constantly and regularly obeying the Laws of their Nature, necessarily employ all their Natural Powers in promoting the same End; so 'tis evident it cannot but * be the *Will of God*, that all rational Creatures, whom he has indued with those singular Powers and Faculties, of Understanding, Liberty and Free-choice, whereby they are exalted in Dignity above the rest of the World, should likewise employ those their extraordinary Faculties in preserving the *Order and Harmony* of the Creation, and not in introducing *Disorder and Confusion* therein. The Nature indeed and Relations, the Proportions and Disproportions, the Fitneses and Unfitneses of Things, are eternal, and in themselves absolutely unalterable; But this is only upon Supposition that the Things Exist, and that they Exist in such Manner as they at present do. Now that Things Exist in such Manner as they do, or that they Exist at all, depends intirely on the Arbitrary Will and good Pleasure of God. At the same Time therefore, and by the same Means, that God manifests it to be his Will that Things should Exist, and that they should Exist in such Manner as they do (as by *Creating* them he at first did, and by *Preserving* them he still continually does, declare it to be his Will they should) he at the same Time manifestly declares, that all such moral Obligations, as are the *Result of the necessary Proportions and Relations of Things*, are likewise *His positive Will and Command*. And consequently whoever acts contrary to the forementioned *Reasons and Proportions of Things*, by *dishonouring God*, by *introducing unjust and unequal Dealings*

* Mens humana non potest non judicare, esse longè credibilis, quod eadem constantissima voluntas, à qua hominibus datum est esse, pariter mallet ipsos porro esse & valere, hoc est, conservari & felicitate frui, quam illo deturbari de statu, in quo ipsos collocavit.—Sic scilicet *e voluntate creandi*, cognoscitur *voluntas conservandi* tuendiq; homines. Ex hac autem innotescit *obligatio*, qua tene-mur ad inserviendum eidem voluntati notæ. *Cumberl. de Leg. Nat. pag. 227.*

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ings among Equals, by destroying his own Being, or by any way corrupting, abusing, and misapplying the Faculties wherewith God has indued him, (as has been above more largely explained) is unavoidably guilty of Transgressing at the same Time the positive Will and Command of God, which in this Manner also is sufficiently discovered and made known to him.

And from
the Ten-
dency of the
Practice of
Morality
to the
Good and
Happiness
of the
whole
World.

3. The same Thing may likewise further appear from the following Consideration : Whatever tends directly and certainly to promote the Good and Happiness of the Whole, and (as far as is consistent with that chief End) to promote also the Good and Welfare of every particular Part of the Creation, must needs be * agreeable to the Will

* Dubitari non potest, quin Deus, qui ita naturalem rerum omnium ordinem constituit, ut talia sint actionum humanarum consequentia erga ipsos auctores, fecitque ut ordinaria hæc consequentia ab ipsis præsciri possint, aut summa cum probabilitate expectari; voluerit hæc ab iis considerari, antequam ad agendum se accingerent; atque eos his provisus velut argumentis in Legum sanctione contentis determinari. *Cum-berl. de Leg. Nat. pag. 228.*

Rektor, seu Causa prima rationalis, cujus voluntate res ita disponuntur, ut hominibus satis evidenter indicetur, Actus quosdam illorum esse media necessaria ad finem ipsis necessarium; Vult homines ad hos Actus obligari, vel hos Actus Imperat. *Id. pag. 285.*

of God, who, being infinitely Self-sufficient to his own Happiness, could have no other Motive to create Things at all, but only that he might communicate to them his Goodness and Happiness, and who, consequently, cannot but expect and require, that all his Creatures should, according to their several Powers and Faculties, endeavour to promote the same End. Now that the exact Observance of all those moral Obligations, which have before been proved to arise necessarily from the Nature and Relation of Things, (that is to say, Living agreeably to the unalterable Rules of Justice, Righteousness, Equity, and Truth) is the certainest and directest Means to promote the Welfare and Happiness, as well of Every Man in

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in particular, both in Body and Mind, as of All Men in general considered with respect to Society, is so very manifest, that even the greatest Enemies of all Religion, who suppose it to be nothing more than a worldly or State-policy, do yet, by that very Supposition, confess thus much concerning it. And indeed This 'tis not possible for any one to deny. For the Practice of *moral*

Virtue does * as plainly and undeniably tend to the *Natural Good* of the World, as any *Physical Effect* or *Mathematical Truth* is naturally consequent to the Principles on which it depends, and from which it is regularly derived.

* *Pari sane ratione (ac in Arithmetice operationibus) Doctrinæ Moralis veritas fundatur in immutabili cohærentia inter Felicitatem summam quam Hominum vires assequi valent, & Actus Benevolentiae universalis. Id. pag. 23.*

And without such Practice, in some Degree, the World can never be happy in any tolerable Measure: As is sufficiently evident from Mr. *Hobbs's* own Description of the extreme miserable Condition that Men would be in through the Total Defect of the Practice of all *moral Virtue*, if they were to live in That State which He styles (falsely and contrary to all Reason, as has been before fully proved) *the State of Nature*; but which really is a State of the grossest Abuse, and most unnatural Corruption and Misapplication of Mens natural Faculties, that can be imagined. For since God has plainly so constituted the Nature of Man, that they stand continually in Need of each other's Help and Assistance, and can never live comfortably without Society and mutual Friendship; and are indued with the Faculties of Reason and Speech, and with other natural Powers, evidently fitted to enable them to assist each other in all Matters of Life, and mutually to promote universal Love and Happiness, 'tis manifestly agreeable to Nature, and to the *Will of God* who gave them these Faculties, that they should employ them wholly to this regular
and

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and good End. And consequently 'tis on the contrary evident likewise, that all Abuse and Misapplication of these Faculties, to hurt and destroy, to cheat and defraud, to oppress, insult, and domineer over each other, is directly contrary both to the Dictates of Nature and to the *Will of God*; Who, necessarily doing always what is Best and Fittest, and most for the Benefit of the whole Creation, 'tis manifest cannot Will the Corruption and Destruction of any of his Creatures, any otherwise than as his preserving their natural Faculties, (which in themselves are good and excellent, but cannot but be capable of being abused and misapplied) necessarily implies a consequential Permission of such Corruption.

And This now is the great Aggravation of the Sin and Folly of all Immorality, that it is an obstinate setting-up the *Self-will* of frail, finite, and fallible Creatures; as in Opposition to the eternal *Reason* of Things, the unprejudiced *Judgment* of their own Minds, and the general *Good and Welfare* both of Themselves and their Fellow-creatures; so also in Opposition to the *Will* of the Supreme *Author and Creator* of all Things, who gave them their Beings, and all the Powers and Faculties they are indued with: In Opposition to the *Will* of the All-wise *Preserver and Governor* of the Universe, on whose gracious Protection they depend every Moment for the Preservation and Continuance of their Beings: And in Opposition to the *Will* of their greatest *Benefactor*, to whose Bounty they wholly owe whatever they enjoy at present, and all the Hopes of what they expect hereafter. This is the highest of all Aggravations: The utmost *Unreasonableness*, joined with obstinate *Disobedience*, and with the greatest *Ingratitude*.

III. *Though the fore-mentioned eternal Moral Obligations are incumbent, indeed, on all rational Creatures, antecedent to any Respect of particular Reward or Punishment; yet they must certainly and necessarily be attended with Rewards and Punishments. Because the same Reasons, which prove God himself to be necessarily Just and Good, and the Rules of Justice, Equity, and Goodness, to be his unalterable Will, Law, and Command, to all created Beings, prove also, that he cannot but be pleased with and approve such Creatures as imitate and obey him by observing those Rules, and be displeased with such as act contrary thereto; and consequently, that he cannot but some Way or other make a suitable Difference in his Dealings with them, and manifest his Supreme Power and absolute Authority in finally supporting, maintaining, and vindicating effectually the Honour of these his Divine Laws, as becomes the Just and Righteous Governor and Disposer of all Things.*

This Proposition also is in a Manner Self-evident.

For 1st, if God is himself necessarily a Being (as *That the Practice of Virtue or Vice must be attended with Rewards and Punishments, proved from the Attributes of God.* has been before shewn) of infinite Goodness, Justice, and Holiness: And if the same Reasons, which prove the Necessity of these Attributes in God himself, prove moreover (as has likewise been shewn already) that the same Moral Obligations must needs be his positive Will, Law, and Command, to all rational Creatures; It also follows necessarily, by the same Argument, that He cannot but be *Pleased with and Approve* such Creatures as imitate and obey him by observing those Rules, and be *Displeased with* such as act contrary thereto. And if so, then, in the Nature of the Thing itself, 'tis evident, that, having absolute Power and uncontrollable Authority, as being Supreme Governor and Disposer of all Things, He cannot but *Signify*, by some Means or other, his Approbation of the one, and his Displeasure against the other. And this can

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can no Way be done to any effectual Purpose, but by the Annexing of respective *Rewards and Punishments*. Wherefore, if Virtue goes finally *unrewarded*, and Wickedness *unpunished*; then God never *Signifies* his Approbation of the one, nor his Displeasure against the other; and if so, then there remains no sufficient Proof, that he is really at all *Pleased or Displeased* with either: And the Consequence of That will be, that there is no Reason to think the one to be his *Will and Command*, or that the other is *Forbidden* by him: Which being once supposed, there will no longer remain any certain Evidence of his own *Moral Attributes*, contrary to what has been already demonstrated.

And from the Necessity there is, that there should be some Vindication of the Honour of God's Laws and Government.

2. The Certainty of *Rewards and Punishments* in general may also somewhat otherwise be deduced from their being necessary to support the *Honour of God*, and of *his Laws and Government*, in the following Manner: 'Tis manifest we are obliged, in the highest Ties of Duty and Gratitude, to pay all possible *Honour* to God, from whom we receive our Being, and all our Powers and Faculties, and whatever else we enjoy. Now 'tis plain likewise, that we have no other Way to *Honour God*, (whose Happiness is capable of no Addition from any Thing that any of his Creatures are capable of doing) than by *Honouring*, that is, by Obeying, *his Laws*. The *Honour* therefore, that is thus done to *his Laws*, God is pleased to accept as done *immediately to himself*. And though we were indeed absolutely obliged in Duty to honour him in this Manner, notwithstanding that there had been no Reward to be expected thereupon; yet 'tis necessary, in the Government of the World, and well-becoming an infinitely wise and good Governor, that *those who Honour Him* be *should Honour*; that is, should distinguish them with suitable Marks of his Favour. On the contrary, Though nothing that weak and finite Creatures are able

able to do, can in the least diminish from the absolute Glory and Happiness of God; yet, as to Us, the Dishonouring, that is, the Disobeying his Laws, is a Dishonouring of Himself; that is, 'tis, as much as in Us lies, a despising his Supreme Authority, and bringing his Government into Contempt. Now the same Reason that there is, why Honour should be *paid* to the Laws of God at all; the same Reason there is, that That Honour should be *vindicated*, after it has been diminished and infringed by Sin. For no Law-giver, who has Authority to require Obedience to his Laws, can or ought to see his Laws despised or dishonoured, without taking some Measures to vindicate the Honour of them, for the Support and Dignity of his own Authority and Government. And the only Way, by which the Honour of a Law, or of its Author, can be vindicated, after it has been infringed by wilful Sin, is either by the *Repentance and Reformation* of the Transgressor, or by his *Punishment and Destruction*. So that God is necessarily obliged, in Vindication of the Honour of his Laws and Government, to punish those who presumptuously and impenitently disobey his Commandments. Wherefore, if there be no Distinction made by suitable *Rewards and Punishments*, between those who obey the Laws of God, and those who obey them not; then God suffers the Authority of his Laws to be finally trampled upon and despised, without ever making any Vindication of it. Which being impossible, it will follow, that these Things are not really the Laws of God, and that he has no such Regard to them as we imagine. And the Consequence of this must needs be the Denial of his *Moral Attributes*, contrary, as before, to what has been already proved. And consequently the Certainty of *Rewards and Punishments* in general is necessarily established.

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IV. Though, in order to establish this suitable Difference between the Fruits or Effects of Virtue and Vice, so reasonable in itself, and so absolutely necessary for the Vindication of the Honour of God, the Nature of Things, and the Constitution and Order of God's Creation, was originally such, that the Observance of the eternal Rules of Justice, Equity, and Goodness, does indeed of itself tend, by direct and natural Consequence, to make all Creatures happy, and the contrary Practice to make them miserable : Yet since, through some great and general Corruption and Depravation, (whence-soever That may have arisen) the Condition of Men in this present State is such, that the natural Order of Things in this World is in Event manifestly perverted, and Virtue and Goodness are visibly prevented in great Measure from obtaining their proper and due Effects in establishing Mens Happiness proportionable to their Behaviour and Practice : Therefore 'tis absolutely impossible, that the whole View and Intention, the original and the final Design, of God's creating such rational Beings as Men are, and placing them on this Globe of Earth, as the chief and principal, or indeed (to speak more properly) the only Inhabitants, for whose Sake alone this Part at least of the Creation is manifestly fitted up and accommodated ; 'Tis absolutely impossible, (I say) that the Whole of God's Design in all this should be nothing more, than to keep up eternally a Succession of such short-lived Generations of Men, as we at present are ; and those in such a corrupt, confused, and disorderly State of Things, as we see the World is now in ; without any due Observation of the eternal Rules of Good and Evil ; without any clear and remarkable Effect of the great and most necessary Difference of Things ; and without any final Vindication of the Honour and Laws of God, in the proportionable Reward of the best, or Punishment of the worst of Men. And consequently 'tis certain and necessary, (even as certain as the moral
Attributes

Attributes of God before demonstrated) that, instead of the continuing an eternal Succession of new Generations in the present Form and State of Things, there must, at some Time or other, be such a Revolution and Renovation of Things, such a Future State of Existence of the same Persons, as that, by an exact Distribution of Rewards and Punishments therein, all the present Disorders and Inequalities may be set right, and that the whole Scheme of Providence, which to Us, who judge of it by only one small Portion of it, seems now so inexplicable and confused, may appear, at its Consummation, to be a Design worthy of infinite Wisdom, Justice and Goodness.

1. In order to establish a just and suitable Difference between the respective Fruits or Effects of Virtue and Vice, the Nature of Things, and the Constitution and Order of God's Creation, was originally such, that the Observance of the eternal Rules of Piety, Justice, Equity, Goodness, and Temperance, does of itself plainly tend, by direct and natural Consequence, to make all Creatures happy; and the contrary Practice, to make them miserable. This is evident in general, because the Practice of universal Virtue is (in Imitation of the Divine Goodness) the Practice of That which is *Best* in the *Whole*; and That which tends to the Benefit of the *Whole*, must of necessary Consequence, originally, and in its own Nature, tend also to the Benefit of every individual Part of the Creation. More particularly, a frequent and habitual Contemplating the infinitely excellent Perfections of the All-mighty Creator, and All-wise Governor of the World, and our most bountiful Benefactor; so as to excite in our Minds a suitable Adoration, Love, and Imitation of those Perfections: A regular employing all our Powers and Faculties, in such Designs, and to such Purposes only, as they were originally fitted and intended for by Nature: And a due subjecting all our Appetites and Passions, to the Government of sober and modest

That, according to the original Constitution of Things, Virtue and Vice are attended with Natural Rewards and Punishments.

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Reason, are evidently the directest Means to obtain such *settled Peace, and solid Satisfaction of Mind*, as is the first Foundation, and the principal and most necessary Ingredient of all true Happiness. The *temperate and moderate Enjoyment* of all the good Things of this present World, and of the Pleasures of Life, according to the Measures of right Reason and simple Nature, is plainly and confessedly the certainest and most direct Method to preserve the *Health and Strength of the Body*: And the Practice of universal *Justice, Equity, and Benevolence*, is manifestly (as has been before observed) as direct and adequate a Means to promote the *general Welfare and Happiness of Men in Society*, as any Physical Motion, or Geometrical Operation, is to produce its natural Effect. So that if All Men were truly Virtuous, and practised these Rules in such Manner, that the Miseries and Calamities, arising usually from the numberless Follies and Vices of Men, were prevented; undoubtedly this great Truth would evidence itself visibly in Fact, and appear experimentally in the happy State and Condition of the World. On the contrary, *Neglect of God* and Insensibleness of our Relation and Duty towards him; *Abuse and unnatural Misapplication of the Powers and Faculties* of our Minds; *Inordinate Appetites* and *unbridled and furious Passions*; necessarily fill the Mind with *Confusion, Trouble, and Vexation*. And *Intemperance* naturally brings *Weakness, Pains, and Sickneses*, into the Body. And mutual *Injustice and Iniquity*; *Fraud, Violence, and Oppression*; *Wars and Desolations*; *Murders, Rapine, and all Kinds of Cruelty*; are sufficiently plain Causes of the *Miseries and Calamities of Men in Society*. So that the original Constitution, Order, and *Tendency* of Things, is evidently enough fitted and designed to establish *naturally* a just and suitable Difference in general between Virtue and Vice, by their respective Fruits or Effects.

2. But

2. But though originally the Constitution and Order of God's Creation was indeed such, that Virtue and Vice are, by the regular *Tendency* of Things, followed with natural Rewards and Punishments: Yet, *in Event*, through some great and general Corruption and Depravation, (whencesoever That may have arisen, *of which more hereafter*;) the Condition of Men, in the present State, is plainly such, that this natural Order of Things in the World is manifestly perverted; Virtue and Goodness are visibly prevented, in great Measure, from obtaining their proper and due Effect, in establishing Mens Happiness proportionable to their Behaviour and Practice; and Wickedness and Vice very frequently escape the Punishment, which the general Nature and Disposition of Things *tends* to annex unto it. Wicked Men, by Stupidity, Inconsiderateness, and sensual Pleasure, often make Shift to silence the Reproaches of Conscience, and feel very little of that Confusion and Remorse of Mind, which ought naturally to be consequent upon their vicious Practices. By accidental Strength and Robustness of Constitution, they frequently escape the natural ill Consequences of Intemperance and Debauchery, and enjoy the same Proportion of Health and Vigour, as those who live up to the Rules of strict and unblameable Sobriety. And Injustice and Iniquity, Fraud, Violence, and Cruelty, though they are always attended indeed with sufficiently calamitous Consequences *in the general*, yet the most of those ill Consequences fall not always upon such Persons *in particular*, as have the greatest Share in the Guilt of the Crimes, but very commonly on those that have the least. On the contrary, Virtue and Piety, Temperance and Sobriety, Faithfulness, Honesty, and Charity, though they have indeed both in themselves the true Springs of Happiness, and also the greatest Probabilities of outward Causes to concur in promoting

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noting their temporal Prosperity, though they cannot indeed be prevented from affording a Man the highest Peace and Satisfaction of Spirit, and many other Advantages both of Body and Mind in Respect of his own particular Person; yet in Respect of those Advantages which the mutual Practice of social Virtues ought to produce in common, 'tis in Experience found true, that the Vices of a great Part of Mankind do so far prevail against Nature and Reason, as frequently to oppress the Virtue of the Best, and not only hinder them from enjoying those public Benefits, which would naturally and regularly be the Consequences of their Virtue, but oft-times bring upon them the greatest temporal Calamities, even for the Sake of that very Virtue. For 'tis but too well known, that Good Men are very often afflicted and impoverished, and made a Prey to the Covetousness and Ambition of the Wicked; and sometimes most cruelly and maliciously persecuted, even upon Account of their Goodness itself. In all which Affairs, the Providence of God seems not very evidently to interpose for the Protection of the Righteous. And not only so, but even in Judgments also, which seem more immediately to be inflicted by the Hand of Heaven, it frequently suffers the Righteous to be involved in the same Calamities with the Wicked, as they are mixed together in Business and the Affairs of the World.

That therefore there must needs be a Future State of Rewards and Punishments.

3. Which Things being so, (*viz.* that there is plainly in Event no sufficient Distinction made between Virtue and Vice; no proportionable and certain Reward annexed to the one, nor Punishment to the other, in this *present* World;) and yet it being no less undeniably certain in the general, as has been before shewn, that *if* there be a God, (and That God be himself a Being of infinite Justice and Goodness, and it be his Will, that all rational
Creatures

Creatures should imitate his moral Perfections, and he * cannot but see and take Notice how every Creature behaves itself; and cannot but be *accordingly* pleased with such as obey his Will and imitate his Nature, and be displeased with such as act contrary thereto;) it being certain, I say, that, *if* these Things be so, God must needs, in Vindication of the Honour of his Laws and Government, *signify*, at *some Time or other*, this his Approbation or Displeasure, by making finally a suitable Difference between those who obey him, and those who obey him not: It follows unavoidably, *either* that all these Notions which we frame concerning God, are *false*, and that there is no Providence, and God sees not, or at least has no Regard to what is done by his Creatures, and consequently the Ground of all his own moral Attributes is taken away, and even his Being itself; *or else* that there must necessarily be a *Future State of Rewards and Punishments after this Life*, wherein all the present Difficulties of Providence shall be cleared up, by an exact and impartial Administration of Justice. But now, that these Notions are *True*, that there is a God, and a Providence, and that God is himself a Being indued with all moral Perfections, and expects and commands that all his rational Creatures should govern all their Actions by the same Rules, has been particularly and distinctly proved already. 'Tis therefore directly demonstrated, that there must be a *Future State of Rewards and Punishments*. *Let not thine Heart envy Sinners, but be thou in the Fear of the Lord all the Day*

* Εἰ δὲ μὴ λανθάνετον τῶς θεῷ, ὁ μὲν δίκαιος θεοφιλεῖς ἂν εἴη, ὁ δὲ ἀδίκος θεομισῆς.— Τὰ δὲ θεοφιλεῖ, ὅσα γε ὑπὸ θεῶν γίνονται, πάντα γίνονται ὡς οἶοντε ἄριστα.— Οὕτως ἄρα ὑποληπτέον περὶ τοῦ δικαίου ἀνδρός, εἴαν τ' ἐν πένιᾳ γίνονται, εἴαν τ' ἐν νόσοις, ἢ τινὶ ἄλλῳ τῶν δοκούντων κακῶν, ὡς τετὼ ταῦτα εἰς ἀγαθὸν τι τελευτήσῃ ζῶντι ἢ καὶ ἀποθανόντι. Οὐ γὰρ δὴ ὑπὸ γε θεῶν ποτέ ἀμελεῖται, ὅς ἂν προσδυμεῖσθαι ἐδέλῃ δίκαιος γίνεσθαι, καὶ ἐπιτηδεύων ἀρετὴν εἰς ὅσον δυνατόν ἀνθρώπῳ ὁμοῖσθαι θεῷ. *Plato de Republ. lib. 10.*

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long; For surely there is a Reward, and thine Expectation shall not be cut off, Prov. xxiii. 17 & 18.

Of the
Stoical
Opinion
concerning
the Self-
sufficiency
of Virtue
to its own
Happiness.

4. This Argument is indeed a common one; but 'tis nevertheless strongly conclusive and unanswerable. So that whoever denies a Future State of Rewards and Punishments, must of Necessity, by a Chain of unavoidable Consequences, be forced to recur to downright Atheism. The only middle Opinion that can be invented, is That Assertion of the *Stoics*, that Virtue is *Self-sufficient* to its own Happiness, and a full Reward to itself in all Cases, even under the greatest Sufferings that can befall a Man for its Sake. Men who were not *Certain* of a Future State (though Most of them did indeed believe it highly probable) and yet would not give up the Cause of Virtue, had no other Way left to defend it, than by asserting that it was in all Cases, and under all Circumstances, absolutely *Self-sufficient* to its own Happiness; whereas on the contrary, because it is manifestly *not Self-sufficient*, and yet undoubtedly the Cause of Virtue is not to be given up, therefore they ought from thence to have concluded the *Certainty* of a Future State. That Virtue is truly *worthy* to be chosen, even merely for its own Sake, without any Respect to any Recompence or Reward, must indeed necessarily be acknowledged. But it does not from hence follow, that He who *Dies* for the Sake of Virtue, is really any more *Happy*, than he that dies for any fond Opinion, or any unreasonable Humour or Obstinacy whatsoever, if he has no other Happiness than the bare Satisfaction arising from the Sense of his Resoluteness in persisting to preserve his Virtue, and in adhering immoveably to what he judges to be right, and there be no Future State wherein he may reap any Benefit of that his resolute Perseverance,

rance. On the contrary, it will only follow, that God has made Virtue necessarily amiable, and such as Mens Judgment and Conscience can never but chuse ; and yet that he has not annexed to it any sufficient Encouragement to support Men effectually in that Choice. Brave indeed, and admirable, were the Things which some of the Philosophers have said upon this Subject, and which some very few extraordinary Men (of which *Regulus* is a remarkable Instance) seem to have made good in their Practice, even beyond the common Abilities of human Nature ; but 'tis very plain (as I before intimated) that the general Practice of Virtue in the World can never be supported upon this Foot, it being indeed neither possible, nor truly reasonable, that Men, by adhering to Virtue,

should Part with their Lives, if * thereby they eternally deprived themselves of all Possibility of receiving any Advantage from that Adherence. Virtue, 'tis true, in its proper Seat, and with all its full Effects and Consequences unhindered, must be confessed to be the *chief Good*, as being truly the Enjoyment, as well as the Imitation of God. But, as the † Practice of it is circumstantiated in this present World, and in the present State of Things, 'tis plain it is not itself the chief Good, but only the *Means* to it ; as Running in a Race is not itself the Prize, but the Way to obtain it.

cendo volumus pervenire, adeptos esse credamus. *Augustin. de Civitate Dei, lib. 19. c. 4.*

Non enim virtus ipsa est *Summum Bonum*, sed effatrix & mater est summi boni ; quoniam perveniri ad illud sine virtute non potest. *Lactant. lib. 3.*

* Οὐκ οἶδα ὅπως μακαρίας ὑπολάβω τὰς μηδὲν ἀπολαύσαντας τῆς ἀρετῆς αγαθόν, δι' αὐτὴν δὲ ταύτην ἀπολλυμένας. *Dionys. Halicarn.*

† Porro ipsa Virtus, cum sibi bonorum culmen vendicet humanorum, quid hic agit nisi perpetua bella cum vitiis ; nec exterioribus, sed interioribus ; nec alienis, sed plane nostris & propriis ? — Absit ergo, ut quamdiu in hoc bello intestino sumus, jam nos beatitudinem, ad quam vin-

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the Cer-
tainty of
a Future
State is
again con-
cluded.

5. 'Tis therefore absolutely impossible, that the whole View and Intention, the Original, and the final Design of God's creating such rational Beings as Men are, indued with such noble Faculties, and so necessarily conscious of the eternal and unchangeable Differences of Good and Evil: 'Tis absolutely impossible (I say) that the whole Design of an infinitely Wise, and Just, and Good God, in all this, should be nothing more than to keep up eternally a Succession of new Generations of Men, and those in such a corrupt, confused, and disorderly State of Things, as we see the present World is in, without any due and regular Observation of the eternal Rules of Good and Evil, without any clear and remarkable Effect of the great and most necessary Differences of Things, without any sufficient Discrimination of Virtue and Vice by their proper and respective Fruits, and without any final Vindication of the Honour and Laws of God, in the proportionable Reward of the Best, or Punishment of the Worst of Men. And consequently 'tis certain and necessary, (even as certain as the moral Attributes of God before demonstrated) that, instead of the continuing an eternal Succession of new Generations in the present Form and State of Things, there must at some Time or other be such a Revolution and Renovation of Things, such a *Future State* of Existence of the same Persons, as that, by an exact Distribution of Rewards and Punishments therein, all the present Disorders and Inequalities may be set right, and that the whole Scheme of Providence, which to Us who judge of it by only one small Portion of it, seems now so inexplicable and much confused, may appear at its Consummation, to be a Design worthy of infinite Wisdom, Justice and Goodness. Without this, All * comes to Nothing. If

* Ita fit, ut si ab illa rerum Summa, quam superius comprehendimus, aberraveris; omnis ratio intereat, & ad nihilum omnia revertantur. *Lactant. lib. 7.*

this Scheme be once broken, there is no Justice, no Goodness, no Order, no Reason, nor any Thing upon which any Argument in moral Matters can be founded, left in the World. Nay, even though we should set aside all Consideration of the *Moral* Attributes of God, and consider only his *Natural* Perfections, his infinite Knowledge and Wisdom, as Framers and Builders of the World, it would, even in That View only, appear infinitely improbable, that God should have created such Beings as Men are, and indued them with such excellent Faculties, and placed them on this Globe of Earth, as the only Inhabitants for whose Sake this Part at least of the Creation is manifestly fitted up and accommodated; and all this without any further Design, than

* only for the Maintaining a perpetual Succession of such short-lived Generations of Mortals as we at present are; to live in the utmost Confusion and Disorder for a very few Years, and then Perish eternally into Nothing. What † can be imagined more vain and empty? what more absurd? what more void of all Marks of Wisdom, than the Fabric of the World, and the Creation of Mankind upon this Supposition? But, then, take in also the Consideration of the *Moral* Attributes of God, and it amounts (as I have said) to a complete Demonstration, that there must be a *Future State*.

* Non enim temerè, nec fortuitò fati & creati sumus; sed profectò fuit quædam vis, quæ generi consuleret humano; nec id gigneret aut aleret, quod cum exantlavisset omnes labores, tum incideret in mortis malum sempiternum. *Cic. Tusc. Quæst. lib. 1.*

† Si sine causa gignimur; si in hominibus procreandis providentia nulla versatur; si casu nobismetipsis ac voluptatis nostræ gratia nascimur; si nihil post mortem sumus: quid potest esse tam *super-uum*, tam *inane*, tam *vanum*, quam humana res est, quam mundus ipse? *Lactant. lib. 7.*

6. It may here at first Sight seem to be a very *Why the* strange Thing, that through the whole System of *Wisdom of* Nature in the *material*, in the *inanimate*, in the *ir-* *God is not* *so clearly* *and plainly* *should* *rational* Part of the Creation, every single Thing

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his should have in itself so many and so obvious, so
evident and undeniable Marks of the infinitely ac-
curate Skill and Wisdom of their Almighty Crea-
tor, that from the brightest Star in the Firmament
of Heaven, to the meanest Pebble upon the Face
of the Earth, there is no one Piece of Matter, which
does not afford such Instances of admirable Artifice
and exact Proportion and Contrivance, as exceeds
all the Wit of Man (I do not say to imitate, but
even) ever to be able fully to search out and com-
prehend : And yet, that in the Management of the
rational and moral World, for the Sake of which all
the rest was created, and is preserved only to be
subservient to it, there should not, *in many Ages*,
be plain Evidences enough, either of the Wisdom,
or of the Justice and Goodness of God, or of so
much as the Interposition of his divine Providence
at all, to convince Mankind clearly and generally
of the World's being under his immediate Care, In-
spection, and Government. This, I say, may indeed
at first Sight seem very wonderful : But if we con-
sider the Matter more closely and attentively, it will
appear not to be so strange and astonishing as we are
apt to imagine. For as in a great *Machine*, con-
trived by the Skill of a consummate Artificer, fitted
up and adjusted with all conceivable Accuracy for
some very difficult and deep-projected Design, and
polished and fine-wrought in every Part of it with
admirable Niceness and Dexterity ; any Man, who
saw and examined one or two Wheels thereof, could
not fail to observe, in those single Parts of it, the
admirable Art and exact Skill of the Work-man ;
and yet the Excellency of the End or Use for which
the Whole was contrived he would not at all be
able, even though he was himself also a skilful Ar-
tificer, to discover and comprehend, without seeing
the Whole fitted up and put together : So though
in every Part of the *natural World*, considered even
single and unconnected, the Wisdom of the great
Creator

and Revealed RELIGION.

Creator sufficiently appears ; yet his Wisdom, and Justice and Goodness, in the Disposition and Government of the *moral* World, which necessarily depends on the Connexion and Issue of the whole Scheme, cannot perhaps be distinctly and fully comprehended by any Finite and Created Beings, much less by frail and weak and short-lived Mortals, before the Period and Accomplishment of certain great Revolutions. But 'tis exceedingly reasonable to believe, that *as* the Great Discoveries, which, by the Diligence and Sagacity of later Ages, have been made in Astronomy and *Natural* Philosophy, have opened surprising Scenes of the Power and Wisdom of the Creator, beyond what Men could possibly have conceived or imagined in Former Times : *So*, at the Unfolding of the whole Scheme of Providence in the Conclusion of this present State, Men will be surprised with the amazing Manifestations of Justice and Goodness, which will then appear to have run through the whole Series of God's Government of the *Moral* World.

This is the chief and greatest Argument, on which the *natural* Proof of a *Future State of Rewards and Punishments* must principally be founded. Yet there are also several other collateral Evidences, which jointly conspire to render the same Thing extremely credible to mere natural Reason. As,

1st, There is very great Reason, even from the *Of the Im-*
bare *Nature* of the Thing itself, to believe the *Soul* ^{mortality}
to be *Immortal* : Separate from all moral Arguments ^{of the Soul,}
drawn from the Attributes of God, and without ^{and the}
any Consideration of the general System of the ^{natural}
World, or of the Universal Order and Constitution, ^{Proofs we}
Connexion, and Dependencies of Things, The Im- ^{have of it.}
mortality of the Soul has been
commonly believed in * all Ages
and in all Places, by the *unlearn-*
ed Part of all civilized People, and

* Et primum quidem omni
Antiquitate, &c. Cic. *Tusc.*
Quæst. lib. 1.

by

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by the almost general Consent of all the most *barbarous* Nations under Heaven; from a *Tradition* so ancient and so universal, as cannot be conceived to owe its Original either to Chance or to vain Imagination, or to any other Cause than to the Author of Nature Himself. And the most *learned and thinking* Part of Mankind, at all Times and in all Countries where the Study of Philosophy has been in any Measure cultivated, have almost generally agreed, that 'tis capable of a just Proof from the abstract Consideration of the *Nature and Operations* of the Soul itself. That none of the known Qualities of *Matter* can, in any possible Variation, Division, or Composition, produce *Sense*, and *Thought*, and *Reason*, is abundantly evident, as has been demonstrated in the * former Discourse. That *Matter* consists of innumerable, divisible, separable, and, for the most Part, actually disjoined Parts, is acknowledged by all Philosophers. That, the *Powers and Faculties of the Soul* being the most remote and distant from all the known Properties of *Matter* that can be imagined, 'tis, at least, a putting great Violence upon our Reason to imagine them superadded by Omnipotence to one and the same Substance, cannot easily be denied. That 'tis highly unreasonable and absurd to suppose the Soul made up of innumerable Consciousnesses, as Matter is necessarily made up of innumerable Parts; and, on the contrary, that 'tis highly reasonable to believe the *Seat of Thought* to be a simple Substance, such as cannot naturally be divided and crumbled into Pieces, as all Matter is manifestly subject to be, must of Necessity be confessed. Consequently the *Soul* will not be liable to be dissolved at the Dissolution of the *Body*; And therefore it will naturally be *Immortal*. All this seems to follow, at least with the highest Degree of Probability, from the single Consideration of the *Soul's* being endued with *Sense*, *Thought*, or *Consciousness*.

* Demonstration of the Being and Attributes of God. See also a Letter to Mr. Dodwel, with the several Answers and Replies.

ness. I cannot imagine, faith *Cyrus, (in that Speech which Xenophon relates he made to his Children a little before his Death) *that the Soul, while it is in this Mortal Body, lives; and that when it is separated from it, then it should die. I cannot persuade myself, that the Soul, by being separated from this Body, which is devoid of Sense, should thereupon become itself likewise de-*

void of Sense. On the contrary, it seems to me more reasonable to believe, that when the Mind is separated from the Body, it should Then become most of all sensible and intelligent: Thus He. But then further: If we take also into the Consideration all the higher and nobler Faculties, Capacities, and Improvements of the Soul, the Argument will still become much stronger. I am persuaded, faith

† Cicero, when I consider with what Swiftmess of Thought the Soul is indued, with what a wonderful Memory of Things past, and Fore-cast of Things to come; how many Arts, how many Sciences, how many wonderful Inventions it has found out; that That Nature, which is Possessor of such Faculties, cannot be Mortal. Again, The Memory,

faith ‡ he, which the Soul has of Things that have been, and its Foresight of Things that will be, and its large Comprehension of Things that at present are, are plainly divine Powers: Nor can the Wit of Man ever invent any Way, by which these Faculties could possibly come to be in Men, but by immediate Communication from God.

* Οὐ τοι ἔγωγε, ὦ σῶμα, εἰδὲ τῆτο πώποτε ἐπέειπον, ὡς ἡ ψυχὴ, ἕως ἂν ἐν θνητῷ σώματι ᾖ, ζῇ· ὅταν δὲ τέττα ἀπαλλαγῇ, τέθνηκεν. Οὐδὲ γε ὅπως ἄφρονος σώματος δίχα γένηται, εἰδὲ τῆτο πέπεισμαι. Ἀλλ' ὅταν ἀκράτος καὶ καθαρός ὁ νῦν ἐκκρίθῃ, τότε καὶ φρονιμώτατον εἶκος αὐτὸν εἶναι. *Cyrus apud Xen.*

† Quid multa? Sic mihi persuasi, sic sentio; quum tanta celeritas animorum fit, tanta memoria præteritorum, futurorum providentia, tot artes, tantæ scientiæ, tot inventa; non posse eam naturam, quæ res eas contineat, esse mortalem. *Cic. de Senectute.*

‡ Quod & præterita teneat, & futura provideat, & complecti possit præsentia; hæc divina sunt. Nec invenietur unquam, unde ad hominem venire possint, nisi a Deo. *Idem, Tusc. Quæst. lib. 1.*

Again, Though
we

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sentem hominis, quamvis eam non videas, ut Deum non vides; tamen, ut Deum agnoscis ex operibus ejus, sic ex memoria rerum & inventione & celeritate Motus, omnique pulchritudine virtutis, vim divinam Mentis agnoscito. *Id. ibid.*

† Licet concurrant plebei omnes philosophi, (sic enim ii qui a Platone & Socrate & ab illa familia dissident, appellandi videntur:) non modo nihil unquam tam eleganter explicabunt, sed ne hoc quidem ipsum quam subtiliter conclusum sit intelligent. *Id. Ibid.*

‡ — Si immortalis natura animai est,
Et sentire potest secreta a corpore nostro;
Quinq; (ut opinor) eam

*we see not, saith * he, the Soul of Man, as indeed neither are we able to see God: Yet, as from the Works of God we are certain of his Being, so from the Faculties of the Soul, its Memory, its Invention, its Swift-ness of Thought, its noble Exercise of all Virtues, we cannot but be convinced of its divine Original and Nature.* And, speaking of the

Strength and Beauty of that Argument, which, from the wonderful Faculties and Capacities of the Soul, concludes it to be of an Immaterial and Im-

mortal Nature; *Though all the vulgar and little Philosophers in the World, saith † he, (for so I cannot but call all such as dissent from Plato and Socrates and those superior Genius's) should put their Heads together, they will not only never, while they live, be able to explain any Thing so neatly and elegantly; but even This Argument it-*

self they will never have Understanding enough fully to perceive and comprehend, how neat and beautiful and strong it is. The chief Prejudice against the Belief of the Soul's existing thus, and living after the Death of the Body; and the Sum of all the Objections brought against this Doctrine by the *Epicurean* Philosophers of old, who denied the Immortality of the Soul; and by certain Atheistical Persons of late, who differ very little from them

in their Manner of Reasoning; is This: That they ‡ cannot apprehend how the Soul can have any Sense or Perception, without the Body, wherein evidently are all the Organs of Sense.

But

But neither * can they any better apprehend or explain how the Soul *in* the Body, (that is, the Body itself, according to their Opinion) is capable of *Sense or Perception* by Means of the *Organs of Sense*. And, besides, This Argument, that the Soul can have no Perception, when all the Ways of Perception, that we have at present Ideas of, are removed, is exactly the very same Argument, and no other than what a Man born blind might make Use of with the very same Force, to prove that none of Us can possibly have, in our present Bodies, any *Perception* of Light or Colours, as I have explained more particularly in the † former Discourse.

This Consideration, of the Soul's appearing in all Reason to be *naturally immortal*, afforded great Pleasure and Satisfaction to the wisest and soberest Men in the Heathen World ; was a great Support under Calamities and Sufferings, especially under such as Men brought upon themselves by being virtuous ; filled them with great Hopes and comfortable Expectations of what was to come hereafter ; and was a mighty Encouragement to the Practice of all moral Virtue, and particularly to take Pains in subduing the Body, and keeping it in Subjection to the Reason of the Mind. *First*, It afforded great Pleasure and Satisfaction to the wisest and soberest Men in the Heathen World, from the bare Contemplation of the Thing itself. *No body*, saith ‡ *Cicero*, shall ever

faciendum est *sensibus*

— At neq; seorsum de
&c. *Lucret. lib. 3.*

Quod autem corpus animæ per se ? quæ materia ? ubi cogitatio illi ? quomodo visus ? auditus ? aut qui tangit ? qui usus ejus ? aut quod sine his bonum ? *Plin. lib. 7.*

Neq; aliud est quidquam cur incredibilis his animorum videatur æternitas, nisi quod nequeunt qualis sit animus vacans corpore intelligere, & cogitatione comprehendere. *Cic. Tusc. Quæst. lib. 1.*

* Quasi vero intelligent qualis sit in ipso corpore. — Mihi quidem naturam animi intuenti, multo difficilior occurrit cogitatio, multoq; obscurior, qualis animus in corpore sit, quam qualis cum exierit. *Id. ibid.*

† *Demonstration of the Being and Attributes of God, p. 76, 77.*

The natural Credibility of the Soul's being Immortal of great Use to the wisest Heathens.

‡ Sed Me nemo de immortalitate depellet. *Cic. Tusc. Quæst. lib. 1.*

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Quod si in hoc erro, quod animos hominum immortales esse credam, libenter erro; nec mihi hunc errorem, quo delector, dum vivo, extorqueri volo. *Idem de Senectute.*

† His & talibus adductus Socrates, nec patronum quaesivit ad iudicium capitis, nec iudicibus supplex fuit; & supremo vitae die, de hoc ipso multa differuit; & paucis ante diebus, cum facile possit educi e custodia, noluit. — Ita enim censebat, itaq; differuit, duas esse vias, duplicesq; cursus animorum, e corpore excedentium, &c. *Id. Tusc. Quaest. lib. 1.*

† O praeclarum diem, quum in illud animorum concilium coetumq; proficiscar, & quum ex hac turba & colluvione discedam! *Idem de Senect.*

drive Me from the Hope of Immortality: And, * If this my Opinion, concerning the Immortality of the Soul, should at last prove an Error; yet, 'tis a very delightful Error: And I will never suffer myself to be undeceived in so pleasing an Opinion, as long as I live. Secondly, It was a great Support to them under Calamities and Sufferings, especially under such as Men brought upon themselves by being Virtuous: These and the like Contemplations, saith † Cicero, had such an Effect upon Socrates, that, when he was tried for his Life, he neither desired any Advocate to plead his Cause, nor made any Supplication to his Judges for Mercy; and, on the very last Day of his Life, made many excellent Discourses upon this Subject; and a few Days before, when he had an Opportunity offered him to have escaped out of Prison, he would not lay hold of it. For thus he believed, and thus he taught, that, when the Souls of Men depart out of their Bodies, they go two different Ways; the Virtuous to a Place of Happiness, the Wicked and the Sensual to Misery. Thirdly, It filled them with great Hopes and comfortable Expectations of what was to come hereafter: O happy Day, saith ‡ the good old Man in Cicero, when I shall go to that blessed Assembly of Spirits, and depart out of this wicked and miserably confused World. Lastly, It was a mighty Encouragement to the Practice of all moral Virtue, and particularly to take Pains in subduing the Body, and keeping it in Subjection to the

the Reason of the Mind : *We ought to spare no Pains, saith * Plato, to obtain the Habit of Virtue and Wisdom in this Life ; for the Prize is noble, and the Hope is very great.*

Again, having reckoned up the temporal Advantages of Virtue in the present World, he adds : † *But we have not yet mentioned the greatest and chiefest Rewards which are proposed to Virtue ; For, What can be truly great, in so small a Proportion of Time ? the whole Age of the longest Liver, in this our present World, being inconsiderable and nothing in Comparison of Eternity.*

And again, *These Things, saith ‡ he, are nothing, either in Number or Greatness, in Comparison with those Rewards of Virtue, and Punishments of Vice, which attend Men after Death.*

And, to mention no more Places : *They, saith || he, who in the Games hope to obtain a Victory in such poor Matters, as Wrestling, Running, and the like, think not much to prepare themselves for the Contest by great Temperance and Abstinence : And shall Our Scholars in the Study of Virtue not have Courage and Resolution enough to persevere with Patience, for a far nobler Prize ? Words very like those of St. Paul, 1 Cor. ix. 24. Know ye not, that they which run in a Race, run all ; And every Man that striveth for the Mastery, is Temperate in all Things ? Now they do it to obtain a corruptible Crown, but we an Incorruptible.*

* Χρὴ πάντα ποιεῖν, ὥστε ἀρετῆς καὶ φρονήσεως ἐν τῷ βίῳ μετασχεῖν· καλὸν γὰρ τὸ ἀθλόν, καὶ ἡ ἐλπίς μεγάλη. *Plato in Phædone.*

† Καὶ μὲν τὰ γε μέγιστα ἐπίχειρα ἀρετῆς καὶ προκείμενα ἀθλα ἔ' διεληλύθαμεν. — Τὶ δ' αὖν ἐν γε ὀλίγῳ χρόνῳ μέγα γένοιτο ; πᾶς γὰρ ἕτος γε ὁ ἐκ παιδὸς μέχρι πρεσβύτης χρόνος πρὸς πάντα ὀλίγος· πῶς τις αὖν εἴη. *Plato de Republ. lib. 10.*

‡ Ταῦτα τοίνυν ἔδεν ἐστὶ πλήθει ἔδε μεγέθει πρὸς ἐκεῖνα ἀτελευτήσαντα ἐκάτερον περιμένει. *Idem, ibid.*

|| Οἱ μὲν ἄρα νίκης ἕνεκα πάλης καὶ δρόμων καὶ τῶν τοιούτων, ἐτόλμησαν ἀπέχεσθαι. — Οἱ δὲ ἡμέτεροι παῖδες ἀδυνατήσουσι καρτερεῖν, πολὺ καλλίονος ἕνεκα νίκης. *Plato de Legib. lib. 8.*

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Future
State
drawn
from Mens
natural
Desire of
Immorta-
lity.

2. Another Argument which may be used in Proof of a *Future State*, so far as to amount to a very great Probability, is That *necessary Desire of Immortality*, which seems to be naturally implanted in all Men, with an unavoidable *Concern* for what is to come *hereafter*. If there be no Existence after this Life, it will seem that the irrational Creatures, who always enjoy the *present Good* without any Care or Sollicitude for what may happen *afterwards*, are better provided for by Nature than Men, whose Reason and Foresight, and all other those very Faculties, by which they are made more excellent than Beasts, serve them, upon this Supposition, scarcely for any other Purpose, than to render them *uneasy*, and *uncertain*, and *fearful*, and *sollicitous*, about Things which are not. And 'tis not at all probable, that God should have given Men *Appetites*, which were *never to be satisfied*; *Desires*, which had *no Objects* to answer them; and unavoidable *Apprehensions* of what was *never really come to pass*.

Another
drawn
from Mens
Conscience
or Judg-
ment of
their own
Actions.
Rom. ii.
14, 15.

3. Another Argument, which may be brought to prove a *Future State*, is That *Conscience* which all Men have of their own Actions, or That inward *Judgment* which they necessarily pass upon them in their own Minds; whereby they that *have not* any *Law*, are a *Law unto themselves*, their *Conscience bearing Witness*, and their *Thoughts accusing*, or else *excusing one another*. There is no Man, who at any Time does good, and brave, and generous Things, but the Reason of his own Mind applauds him for so doing; and no Man at any Time does Things base and vile, dishonourable and wicked, but at the same Time he condemns himself in what he does. The one is necessarily accompanied with good Hope and Expectation of Reward; the other, with continual Torment and Fear of Punishment. And hence, as before, it is not probable, that God should have so framed and consti-
tuted

tuted the Mind of Man, as necessarily to pass upon itself a *Judgment* which shall *never be verified*, and stand perpetually and unavoidably convicted by a *Sentence* which shall *never be confirmed*.

4. Lastly, Another Argument, which may be drawn from right Reason in Proof of a *Future State* is this, that Man is plainly in his Nature an *Accountable Creature*, and capable of being *Judged*. Those Creatures indeed, whose Actions are all determined by something without themselves, or by what we call mere Instinct, as they are not capable of having a Rule given them, so 'tis evident that neither can they be accountable for their Actions. But *Man*, who has intirely within himself a free Principle or Power of determining his own Actions upon *moral* Motives, and has a Rule given him to act by, which is Right Reason, can be, nay, cannot but be, *accountable* for all his Actions, how far they have been agreeable or disagreeable to that Rule. Every Man, because of the natural Liberty of his Will, *can* and *ought* to govern all his Actions by some certain Rule, and give a Reason for every Thing he does. Every moral Action he performs, being Free and without any Compulsion or natural Necessity, proceeds either from some *Good Motive* or some *Evil* one, is either *conformable to right Reason* or *contrary* to it, is worthy either of *Praise* or *Dispraise*, and capable either of *Excuse* or *Aggravation*. Consequently 'tis highly reasonable to be supposed, that since there is a Superior Being, from whom we received all our Faculties and Powers; and since in the *right Use*, or in the *Abuse* of those Faculties, in the governing them by the Rule of right Reason, or in the neglecting that Rule, consists all the moral Difference of our Actions; there will at some Time or other be an *Examination* or *Inquiry* made into the Grounds, and Motives, and Circumstances of our several Actions, how agreeable or disagreeable

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able they have been to the Rule that was given us, and a suitable *Judgment* be passed upon them. Upon these Considerations, the Wisest of the Ancient Heathens believed and taught, that the Actions of every particular Person should all be strictly tried and examined after his Death, and he have accordingly a just and impartial Sentence passed upon him. Which Doctrine though the Poets indeed wrapt up in Fables and obscure Riddles, yet the wisest of the Philosophers had a better Notion of it, and more agree-

* Ταύτης τῆς δίκης ἔτε σὺ μήποτε, οὔτε εἰ ἄλλῃ ἀτυχῆς γενόμενῃ ἐπευξήται περιγενέσθαι θεῶν — Οὐ γὰρ ἀμεληθήσῃ ποτ' ὑπ' αὐτῆς· οὐχ οὕτω σμικρὸς ὢν, δύσῃ κατὰ τὸ τῆς γῆς βάθος· οὐδ' ὑψηλὸς γενόμενῃ, εἰς τὸν οὐρανὸν ἀναπτύσῃ· τίσεις δὲ αὐτῶν τὴν προσήκυσαν τιμωρίαν, εἴ τ' ἐνθάδε μένων, εἴτε καὶ ἐν ἄδῃ διαπορευθεῖς, εἴθε καὶ τούτων εἰς ἀγιώτερον ἔτι διακομισθεῖς τόπον. *Plato de Legib. lib. 10.*

able to Reason. From this *Judgment*, saith * *Plato*, let no Man hope to be able to escape: For though you could descend into the very Depth of the Earth, or fly on high to the Extremities of the Heavens; yet should you never escape the just *Judgment* of the Gods, either before or after Death. An Expression very agreeable to that of the Psalmist, *Psalms cxxxix. 8, 9.*

These, I say, are very good and strong Arguments for the great Probability of a *Future State*: But That drawn, as above, from the Consideration of the Moral Attributes of God, seems to amount even to a Demonstration.

V. Though the Necessity and Indispensableness of all the great and moral Obligations of Natural Religion, and also the Certainty of a *Future State* of Rewards and Punishments, be thus in general deducible, even demonstrably, by a Chain of clear and undeniable Reasoning: Yet (in the present State of the World, by what Means soever it came originally to be so corrupted, the particular Circumstances whereof could not Now be certainly known but by Revelation) such is the Carelessness, Inconsiderateness, and Want of Attention of the greater Part of Mankind; so many the Prejudices

judices and false Notions *taken up by evil Education; so strong and violent the unreasonable Lusts, Appetites, and Desires of Sense; and so great the Blindness, introduced by superstitious Opinions, vicious Customs, and debauched Practices through the World; that very Few are able, in Reality and Effect, to discover these Things clearly and plainly for themselves: But Men have great Need of particular Teaching, and much Instruction, to convince them of the Truth, and Certainty, and Importance of these Things; to give them a due Sense and clear and just Apprehensions concerning them; and to bring them effectually to the Practice of the plainest and most necessary Duties.*

1. There is naturally, in the greater Part of Man-
kind, such a prodigious *Carelessness, Inconsiderateness,* *Men hindered from*
and *Want of Attention,* *discovering*
from making Use of their Reason, in such Manner *and understanding*
as to discover these Things *clearly and effectually* for *Religious*
themselves; but is the Cause of the *grosslest and most* *Truths by*
stupid Ignorance imaginable. Some seem to have *Careless-*
little or hardly any Notion of God at all; and More *ness and*
take little or no Care to *frame just and worthy Ap-* *Want of*
prehensions concerning him, concerning the Divine *Attention.*
Attributes and Perfections of his *Nature*; and still
many More are intirely negligent and heedless, to
consider and discover what may be his *Will*. Few
make a due Use of their Natural Faculties, to di-
stinguish rightly the essential and unchangeable
Difference between *Good* and *Evil*; Fewer yet so
attend to the natural Notices which God has given
them, as by their own Understanding to collect,
that What is *Good* is the express *Will and Command*
of God, and What is *Evil* is *Forbidden* by him:
And still Fewer consider with themselves the
Weight and Importance of these Things, the natu-
ral *Rewards* or *Punishments* that are frequently an-
nexed in *this Life* to the Practice of Virtue or Vice,
and the much greater and certainer *Difference* that
shall be made between them in a *Life to come*. Hence

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it is, that (as Travellers assure us) even some whole Nations seem to have very little Notion of God, or, at least, very poor and unworthy Apprehensions concerning him; and a very small Sense of the Obligations of Morality; and very mean and obscure Expectations of a Future State. Not that God has any where *left himself* wholly *without Witness*; or that the Difference of Good and Evil is to any rational Being undiscernible; or that Men, at any Time or in any Nation, could ever be firmly and generally persuaded in their own Minds, that they perished absolutely at Death: But, through *Supine Negligence and Want of Attention*, they let their

* Multis signis natura declarat quid velit: — obsurdescimus tamen nescio quo modo, nec audimus. *Cic. de Amicit.*

Reason (as it were) sleep, and * are deaf to the Dictates of common Understanding; and, like brute Beasts, minding only the Things that are before their Eyes, never consider any Thing that is abstract

from Sense, or beyond their present private Temporal Interest. And it were well, if, even in civilized Nations, this was not, very nearly, the Case of too many Men, when left intirely to themselves, and void of particular Instruction.

And by
early Pre-
judices and
false No-
tions.

2. The greater Part of Mankind are not only *Unattentive*, and barely *Ignorant*; but commonly they have also, through a careless and Evil Education, taken up *early Prejudices*, and many *vain and foolish Notions*, which pervert their natural Understanding, and hinder them from using their Reason in *moral Matters* to any effectual Purpose. This cannot be better described than in the Words of

† Si tales nos natura genuisset, ut eam ipsam intueri & perspicere, eaque optimâ duce cursum vitæ conficere possemus; haud esset fanè quod quisquam rationem &

Cicero: If we had come into the World, saith † he, in such Circumstances, as that we could clearly and distinctly have discerned Nature herself, and have been able, in the Course of our Lives, to fol-
low

low her true and uncorrupted Directions : This alone might have been sufficient, and there would have been little Need of Teaching and Instruction. But Now Nature has given us only some small Sparks of right Reason, which we so quickly extinguish with corrupt Opinions and evil Practices, that the true Light of Nature no where appears. As soon as we are brought into the World, immediately we dwell in the Midst of all Wickedness, and are surrounded with a Number of most perverse and foolish Opinions ; so that we seem to suck in Error even with our Nurses Milk. Afterwards, when we return to our Parents, and are committed to Tutors ; then we are further stocked with such Variety of Errors, that Truth becomes perfectly overwhelmed with Falshood ; and the most natural Sentiments of our Minds are intirely stifled with confirmed Follies. But when, after all this, we enter upon Business in the World, and make the Multitude, conspiring every-where in Wickedness, our great Guide and Example ; then our very Nature itself is wholly transformed, as it were, into corrupt Opinions. A livelier Description of the present corrupt Estate of Human Nature is not easily to be met with.

3. In the Generality of Men, the *Appetites and And by sensual* Desires of Sense are so violent and importunate ; the *Appetites, Passions, and* Business and the Pleasures of the World take up so much of their Time ; and their *worldly* Passions are so very strong and unreasonable, that, of Themselves, they *Business.* are very backward and unapt to employ their Reason, and fix their Attention upon moral Matters ;

doctrinam requireret. verò, &c. Cic. Tusc. Quæst. lib. 3.

Nunc parvulos nobis dedit igniculos, quos celeriter malis moribus opinionibusq; depravatis sic restinguimus, ut nusquam Naturæ lumen appareat. — Simul atque editi in Lucem & suscepti sumus, in omni continuo pravitate, & in summa opinionum perversitate versamur ; ut pene cum lacte nutricis, errorem fuisse videamur. Cum vero parentibus redditi, deinde magistris traditi sumus, tum ita variis imbuimur erroribus, ut vanitati veritas, & opinioni confirmatæ natura ipsa cedat. — Cum vero accedit eodem, quasi maximus quidem magister, populus atque omnis undique ad vitia consentiens multitudo ; tum plane inficimur opinionum pravitate, a naturaque ipsa desciscimus. Ibid.

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and still more backward to apply themselves to the *Practice* of them. *The Love of Pleasure* is (as

* "Ἐτι δὲ ἐκ νηπίου πᾶσιν ἡμῶν
συντέτραπται [ἡδονή·] διὸ καὶ
χαλεπὸν ἀποτρίψασθαι τὸ τοιοῦτον
πάθος, ἐγκειχρωσμένον τῷ βίῳ.
Aristot. Ethic. lib. 2. c. 2.

Aristotle elegantly * expresses it) so
nourished up with us from our very
Childhood, and so *incorporated* (as
it were) into the whole Course
of our Lives, that 'tis very diffi-
cult for Men to withdraw their

Thoughts from Sensual Objects,
and fasten them upon Things remote from Sense.
And if, perhaps, they do attend a little, and begin
to see the Reasonableness of governing themselves
by a higher Principle than mere Sense and Appe-

† *Vitia de mercede solli-
citant : Avaritia pecuniam
promittit : Luxuria multas ac
varias voluptates : Ambitio
purpuram & plausum ; & ex
hoc potentiam, & quicquid
potentia ponit. Senec. Epist. 59.*

Τόδε δὲ ἴσμεν, ὅτι ταῦτα τὰ
πάθη ἐν ἡμῶν οἷον νεῦρα ἢ μήριν-
θοί τινες ἐνέσσει, σπῶσί τε ἡμᾶς,
καὶ ἀλλήλαις ἀνδράσιν, ἐναντία
ἔσσει, ἐπ' ἐναντίας πράξεις. *Plato
de Legib. lib. 1.*

‡ — Video meliora pro-
boque, Deteriora sequor.

|| "Ἐδοξε δὲ, καὶ νῦν ἔτι δοκεῖ,
τὰ μὲν ἄλλα ἐπιτηδεύματα πάν-
τα, οὐ σφόδρα χαλεπὰ εἶναι·
πὸ δὲ ἵνα ἰσόπον· χρὴ γίνεσθαι
χρηστὰς ἀνθρώπων, παγκρατέων.
Plato in Epinomide.

§ Φρόνησιν δὲ καὶ ἀληθεῖς
δόξας βεβαιῶν. εὐτυχὲς ὅτω καὶ
πρὸς τὸ γῆρας παρεγένετο. *Id.
de Legib. lib. 2.*

tite ; yet with such † *Variety of
Temptations* are they perpetually
encompassed and continually sol-
lited, and the Strength of *Pas-
sions and Appetites* makes so great
Opposition to the Motions of
Reason, that commonly they
yield and submit to practise those
Things, which, at the same Time,
the Reason of their own Mind ‡
condemns ; and what they allow
not, That they Do. Which Obser-
vation is so true of too great a
Part of Mankind, that *Plato* upon
this Ground declares || *All Arts
and Sciences to have, in his Opinion,
less of Difficulty in them, than that
of making Men Good : Infomuch
that, it § is well, saith he, if
Men can come to attain a right
Sense, and just and true Notions of
Things, even by that Time they ar-
rive at old Age.*

and Revealed RELIGION.

4. But that which, above all other Things, most depraves Mens natural Understanding, and hinders them from discerning and judging rightly of Moral Truths, is this : That *as stupid and careless Ignorance leads them into fond and superstitious Opinions, and the Appetites of Sense overcome and tempt them into Practices contrary to their Conscience and Judgment ; so, on the Reverse, the Multitude of superstitious Opinions, vicious Habits, and debauched Practices, which prevail in all Ages through the greater Part of the World, do reciprocally increase Mens gross Ignorance, Carelessness, and Stupidity.* False and unworthy Notions of God, or superstitious Apprehensions concerning him, which Men carelessly and inconsiderately happen to take up at first, do (as it were) blind the Eyes of their Reason for the Future, and hinder them from discerning what of itself originally was easy enough to be discovered. *That which may be known of God, has been manifest enough unto Men in all Ages ; for God hath shewed it unto them : For the invisible Things of Him from the Creation of the World are clearly seen, being understood by the Things that are made, even his eternal Power and Godhead : So that they, who are ignorant of him, cannot but be without Excuse. But, notwithstanding all the Heathen World had so certain Means of knowing God, yet generally they glorified him not as God ; neither were thankful, but became vain in their Imaginations, and their foolish Heart was darkened : And they changed the Glory of the incorruptible God into Images of the meanest and most contemptible Creatures ; and worshipped and served the Creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever.* The natural Consequence of which absurd Idolatry, and also the just Judgment of God upon them for it, was, That *they were given up to a reprobate Mind, to Uncleanneſs, and to all vile Affections, to such a Degree, that not only their common Practices, but even their most*

And all, by vicious Habits and Practices.

Rom. i. 19, &c.

Sacred

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Sacred Rights and Religious Performances, became themselves the extremest Abominations. And when Mens *Morals* are thus corrupted, and they run with Greediness into all Excess of Riot and Debauchery; then, *on the other Hand*, by the same natural Consequence, and by the same just Judgment of God, both their *Vicious Customs* and *Actions*, as well as Superstitious Opinions, reciprocally increase the *Blindness of their Hearts*, darken the Judgment of their *Understandings*, stu-

* Justos natura esse factos; — tantam autem esse corruptelam *malæ consuetudinis*, ut ab ea tanquam igniculi extinguantur a natura dati; exorianturq; & confirmantur vitia contraria. *Cic. de Legib. lib. 1.*

pify and fear their *Consciences* so as to become *past feeling*, and, by Degrees, * extinguish wholly that *Light of Nature* in their own Minds, which was given them originally to inable them to discern between *Good* and *Evil*.

Wherefore Men have great Need to be taught and instructed in Matters of Religion.

By these Means it comes to pass, that though the great *Obligations* and the principal *Motives* of Morality are indeed certainly discoverable and demonstrable by right Reason; and all considerate Men, when those Motives and Obligations are fairly proposed to them, must of Necessity (as has been fully proved in the foregoing Heads) yield their Assent to them as certain and undeniable Truths; yet, under the Disadvantages now mentioned, (as 'tis the Case of most Men to fall under some or other of them) very Few are of *Themselves* able, in Reality and Effect, to discover those Truths clearly and plainly for themselves: But most Men have great Need of particular *Teaching* and much *Instruction*, not without some Weight of *Authority* as well as Reason and Persuasion:

1st, To raise and stir up their *Attention*; to move them to shake off their habitual Carelessness, Stupidity, and Inconsiderateness; to persuade them to make Use of their natural Reason and Understanding, and to apply their Minds to apprehend and study

the

the Truth and Certainty of these Things. For, as Men, notwithstanding all the rational Faculties they are by Nature indued with, may yet, through mere Neglect and Incogitancy, be grossly and totally ignorant of the plainest and most obvious Mathematical Truths; so Men may also, for Want of Consideration, be very ignorant of some of the plainest Moral Obligations, which, as soon as distinctly proposed to them, they cannot possibly avoid giving their Assent unto.

2. To give them a due *sense* and right and just *Apprehensions* concerning these Things; to convince them of the great *Concern* and vast *Importance* of them; to correct the false Notions, vain Prejudices, and foolish Opinions, which deprave their Judgment; and to remove that Levity and Heedlessness of Spirit, which makes Men frequently to be in their Practice very little influenced by what in abstract Opinion they may seem firmly to believe. For there are many Men, who will think themselves highly injured, if any one should make any Doubt of their Believing the indispensable Obligations of Morality, and the Certainty of a Future State of Rewards and Punishments, who yet, in their Lives and Actions, seem to have upon their Minds but a very small Sense of the Weight and infinite Importance of these great Truths.

3. To *Inculcate* these Things frequently upon Them, and press them effectually to the Practice of the plainest and most necessary Duties; to persuade them to moderate those Passions, to subdue those Lusts, to conquer those Appetites, to despise those Pleasures of Sense, and (which is the greatest Difficulty of all) to reform and correct those vicious Customs and evil Habits, which tempt and hurry them too often into the Commission of such Things, as they are convinced, at the same Time, in the Reason of their own Minds, ought not to be practised.

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tified. For 'tis very possible Men may both clearly understand their Duty, and also be fully convinced of the Reasonableness of practising it; and yet, at Rom. vii. the same Time, find a *Law in their Members war-*
23. *ring and prevailing against the Law of their Mind,*

* Quidam ad magnificas voces excitantur, & transeunt in affectum dicentium, alacres vultu & animo. Rapiunt illos instigatque rerum pulchritudo.— Juvat protinus quæ audias, facere. Afficiuntur illi, & sunt quales jubentur, si illa animo forma permaneat, si non impetum insignem protinus populus honesti dissuasor excipiat. Pauci illam quam conceperant mentem, domum perferre poterunt. *Senec. Epist. 109.*

and bringing them into Captivity to the Law of Sin and Death. Men

* may be pleased with the Beauty and Excellency of Virtue, and have some faint Inclinations and even Resolutions to practise it, and yet at the Return of their Temptations, constantly fall back into their accustomed Vices, if the great Motives of their Duty be not very frequently and very strongly inculcated upon them, so as to make very deep and lasting Impressions upon their Minds;

and they have not some greater and higher Assistance afforded them, than the bare Conviction of their own speculative Reason.

For these Reasons (I say) 'tis absolutely necessary, that, notwithstanding the natural Demonstrableness both of the Obligations and Motives of Morality, yet, considering the manifest Corruptness of the present Estate which human Nature is in, the Generality of Men must not by any Means be left wholly to the Workings of their own Minds, to the Use of their natural Faculties, and to the bare Convictions of their own Reason, but must be particularly *Taught and Instructed* in their Duty, must have the Motives of it frequently and strongly pressed and inculcated upon them with great Weight and Authority, and must have many extraordinary Assistances afforded them, to keep them effectually in the Practice of the great and plainest Duties of Religion.

And

and Revealed RELIGION.

And hence we may, by the Way, justly observe *The great Use and Necessity of an Order of Preachers.* the exceeding great Use and Necessity there is of establishing an Order or Succession of Men, whose peculiar Office and continual Employment it may be to Teach and Instruct People in their Duty, to press and exhort them perpetually to the Practice of it, and to be Instruments of conveying to them extraordinary Assistances for that Purpose. To which excellent Institution, the Right and worthy Notion of God and his Divine Perfections, the just Sense and Understanding of the great Duties of Religion, and the universal Belief and due Apprehension of a Future State of Rewards and Punishments, which the Generality even of the meaner and more ignorant Sort of People among us are now possessed of, is manifestly and undeniably almost wholly owing; as I shall have Occasion hereafter more particularly to observe.

VI. *Though in almost every Age there have indeed been in the Heathen World some wise, and brave, and good Men, who have made it their Business to study and practise the Duties of natural Religion Themselves, and to teach and exhort Others to do the like; who seem therefore to have been raised up by Providence as Instruments to reprove, in some Measure, and put some Kind of Check to the extreme Superstition and Wickedness of the Nations wherein they lived; yet none of these have ever been able to reform the World, with any considerably great and universal Success; because they have been but very Few that have in Earnest set themselves about this excellent Work; and they that have indeed sincerely done it, have themselves been intirely ignorant of some Doctrines, and very doubtful and uncertain of others, absolutely necessary for the bringing about that great End; and those Things which they have been certain of, and in good Measure understood, they*

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they have not been able to prove and explain clearly enough; and those that they have been able both to prove and explain by sufficiently clear Reasoning, they have not yet had Authority enough to inforce and inculcate upon Mens Minds with so strong an Impression as to influence and govern the general Practice of the World.

1. There have indeed in almost every Age been, in the Heathen World, some Wise, and Brave, and Good Men, who have made it their Business to study and practise the Duties of natural Religion *Themselves*, and to teach and exhort *Others* to do the like. An eminent Instance whereof, in the Eastern Nations, the Scripture itself affords us in the History of *Job*; concerning whom it does not certainly appear, that he knew any positive revealed Institution of Religion, or that, before his Sufferings, any immediate Revelation was made to him, as there was to *Abraham*, and the rest of the Patriarchs. Among the Greeks, *Socrates* seems to be an extraordinary Example of this Kind. Concerning whom

Plato tells us, in his *Apology*, that

* Οὐδὲν γὰρ ἄλλο πράττων ἐγὼ περιέρχομαι, ἢ πείθων ὑμῶν καὶ νεωτέρων καὶ πρεσβυτέρων, μήτε σωμάτων ἐπιμελεῖσθαι, μήτε χρημάτων πρότερον, μητε ἄλλου τινὸς ἔγω σφόδρα, ὡς τῆς ψυχῆς, ὅπως ὡς ἀρίστη ἔσται. λέγων, ὅτι ἢ ἐκ χρημάτων ἢ ἀρετῇ γίνεται, ἀλλ' ἐξ ἀρετῆς χρήματα καὶ τ' ἄλλα τ' ἀγαθὰ τοῖς ἀνθρώποις ἅπαντα, καὶ ἰδία καὶ δημοσία. *Plato in Apol. Socrat.*

* he did nothing else, but go continually about, persuading both Old and Young, not to be so much sollicitous to gratify the Appetites of the Body, or to heap up Wealth, or to raise themselves to Honour, or gain any outward Advantage whatsoever, as to improve the Mind, by the continual Exercise of all Virtue and Goodness: Teaching them, that a Man's

true Value did not arise from his Riches, or from any outward Circumstances of Life; but that True Riches, and every real Good, whether public or private, proceeded wholly from Virtue. After him, *Plato* and *Aristotle*, and Others, followed his Example,

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Example, in teaching Morality. And among the Romans, *Cicero*; and in later Times, *Epietetus* and *Antoninus*, and several Others, gave the World admirable Systems of Ethics, and noble moral Instructions and Exhortations, of excellent Use and Benefit to the Generations wherein they lived, and deservedly of great Value and Esteem even unto this Day.

2. So that, I think, it may very justly be supposed, that these Men were raised up and designed by Providence, (the abundant Goodness of God having never *left itself wholly without Witness*, notwithstanding the greatest Corruptions and Provocations of Mankind) as Instruments to reprove in some Measure, and put some Kind of Check to the extreme Superstition and Wickedness of the Nations wherein they lived, or at least to bear Witness against and condemn it. Concerning *Job*, the Case is evident and confessed. And for the same Reason, some of the Ancientest Writers of the Church have not scrupled to * call even *Socrates* also, and some others of the Best of the *Heathen* Moralists, by the Name of *Christians*, and to affirm, that † as *the Law* was as it were a *Schoolmaster* to bring the *Jews* unto *Christ*, so *true moral Philosophy* was to the *Gentiles* a *Preparative* to receive the *Gospel*. This perhaps was carrying the Matter somewhat too far; but to be sure, thus much we may safely assert, that ‡ whatever any of these Men were at any Time inabled to deliver *Wisely* and *Profitably*, and *Agreeably to Divine Truth*, was as a *Light shining in a dark Place*, derived to them by a Ray of that

Who seem to have been designed by Providence to bear Witness against the Wickedness of the Nations wherein they lived.

* Καὶ οἱ μετὰ λόγου βιώσαντες, χριστιανοὶ εἰσι, καὶ ἄθεοι ἐνομίσθησαν· οἷον ἐν Ἑλληνισμῷ μὲν Σωκράτης καὶ Ἡράκλειος, καὶ οἱ ὅμοιοι αὐτοῖς· ἐν βαρβάροις δὲ Ἀβραάμ, &c. *Justin. Apolog. 2.*

† Τάχα δὲ καὶ προηγουμένως τοῖς Ἑλλησιν ἐδόθη ἡ φιλοσοφία τότε, πρὶν ἢ τὸν κύριον καλέσαι καὶ τὰς Ἑλλήνας· ἐπαιδαγωγεῖ γὰρ καὶ αὕτη τὸ Ἑλληνικόν, ὡς ὁ νόμος τὰς Ἑβραίας εἰς χριστὸν· προπαρασκευάζει τοίνυν ἡ φιλοσοφία, προοδοποιούσα τὸν ὑπὸ χριστῷ τελειούμενον. *Clem. Alexand. Strom. 1.*

‡ Ὁ θεὸς γὰρ αὐτοῖς ταῦτα, καὶ ὅσα καλῶς λέλεκται, ἐφάνερωσε. *Orig. advers. Cels. lib. 6.*

infinite

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infinite overflowing Goodness, which *does Good* to all, even both *Just and Unjust*; from God the sole Author of all Truth and Wisdom; and This, for some Advantage and Benefit to the rest of the World, even in its blindest and most corrupt Estate.

But yet none of these Men were ever able to reform the World with any considerable Success.

Rom. i.
21 & 28.

3. But then, notwithstanding the most that can be made of this Supposition, 'tis certain the *Effect* of all the Teaching and Instruction even of the best of the Philosophers in the Heathen World was in Comparison very small and inconsiderable. They never were able to reform the World with any great and universal Success, nor to keep together any considerable Number of Men in the Knowledge and Practice of true Virtue. With Respect to the Worship of God, *Idolatry* prevailed universally in all Nations; and, notwithstanding Men did indeed *know God*, so as to be *without Excuse*, yet they *did not like to retain him in their Knowledge*, but *became vain in their Imaginations*, and *their foolish Heart was darkened*, and *they changed the Glory of the uncorruptible God into Images of the vilest Creatures*; and no Philosophers ever turned any great Number of Men from this absurd *Idolatry* to the Acknowledgment and Worship of the only true God. In Respect of Mens Dealings one with another, Honour, and Interest, and Friendship, and Laws, and the Necessities of Society, did indeed cause *Justice* to be practised in many Heathen Nations to a great Degree; but very Few Men among them were Just and Equitable upon right and true Principles, a due Sense of Virtue, and a constant Fear and Love of God. With respect to Themselves, *Intemperance*, and *Luxury*, and unnatural *Uncleanness*, were commonly practised, even in the most civilized Countries; and This not so much in Opposition to the Doctrine of the Philosophers, as by the Consent indeed and Encouragement of too great a Part of them. I shall not enlarge upon this ungrateful and melancholly Subject: There are Accounts enough Extant,
of

and Revealed RELIGION.

of the universal Corruption and Debauchery of the Heathen World. *St. Paul's* Description of it, in the whole first Chapter of his Epistle to the *Romans*, is alone sufficient; and * the Complaints of their own Writers abundantly confirm it. The Disciples of the best Moralists, at least the Practisers of their Doctrine, were, in their own Life-time, *very † Few*; as too plainly appears from the evil Treatment, which that great Man *Socrates* met withal at *Athens*. And at their Deaths, their Doctrine in great Measure died with them; not having any sufficient Evidence or Authority to support it. And their Followers quickly fell back into the common Idolatry, Superstition, Uncleanneſs, and Debauchery. Of which, the Character the *Roman* Writers give of those that called themselves the Disciples of *Socrates* is a particular and remarkable Instance. These Considerations (so very early did they appear to be true) affected in such a Manner that great Admirer of *Socrates*, *Plato*; that he sometimes seems to give over all Hopes of working any Reformation in Men by Philosophy; and says, that ‡ *a good Man, when he considers these Things, would even chuse to sit quiet, and*

δαρὸς ἀδικίας τε καὶ ἀνοσίων ἔργων, τόντις ἐνθάδε βίον βιώσειναι, καὶ τὴν ἀπαλλαγὴν αὐτῷ μετὰ καλῆς ἐλπίδος ἰλεῶς, ἢ καὶ εὐμενῆς ἀπαλλάξῃναι. *Plato de Republ. lib. 6.*

* Egregium sanctumq; virum
si cerno, bimembri
Hoc monstrum puero, vel
miranti sub aratro
Piscibus inventis, & foetæ
comparo mulæ.

Juvenal. Sat. 13.

See also the Places cited a little below.

† Sint licet perhonesti;
— sed audire deprecemur
quot sint aut fuerint numero.

— *Unus, Duo, Tres.* —
At genus humanum non ex
bonis pauculis, sed ex cæteris
omnibus æstimari convenit.
Arnob. advers. Gentes, lib. 2.

Da mihi virum qui sit iracundus, maledicus, effrænatuſ; paucissimis Dei verbis tam placidum, quam ovem, reddam. Da libidinosum, &c.
— *Numquis hæc Philosophorum aut unquam præstitit, aut præstare, si velit, potest? Lactant lib. 3.*

Παρά μὲν τοῖς Ἑλλήσιν εἰς τις Φαίδων, καὶ ἐκ οἷδα εἰ δεύτερος, &c. *Origen. advers. Cels. lib. 1.*

‡ Ταῦτα λογισμῷ λαβὼν ἡσυχίαν ἔχων, καὶ τὰ αὐτῷ πρᾶττων, οἷον ἐν χειμῶνι κονιορτὶ καὶ ζάλῃς, ὑπὸ πνεύματι φερομένῃ, ὑπὸ τοιχείῳ ὑποσᾶς, ὁρῶν τῆς ἄλλης καταπιμπλαμένῃς ἀνομίας, ἀγαπᾷ εἰ πῃ αὐτὸς κα-

βίον βιώσειναι, καὶ τὴν ἀπαλλαγὴν αὐτῷ μετὰ καλῆς ἐλπίδος ἰλεῶς, ἢ καὶ εὐμενῆς ἀπαλλάξῃναι. *Plato de Republ. lib. 6.*

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shift for himself; like a Man that, in a violent Hurricane, creeps under a Wall for his Defence; and, seeing the whole World round about him filled with all Manner of Wickedness, be content if, preserving his single Self from Iniquity, and every evil Work, he can pass away the present Life in Peace, and at last Die with Tranquillity and good Hope. And indeed, for many Reasons, it was altogether impossible, that the Teaching of the Philosophers should ever be able to reform Mankind, and recover them out of their very degenerate and corrupt Estate, with any considerably great and universal Success.

Because they have been but very Few that have in Earnest set themselves about that excellent Work.

1. In the first Place, Because the Number of those, who have in Earnest set themselves about this excellent Work, have been *exceeding Few*. Philosophers indeed, that called themselves so, there were enough in every Place, and in every Age. But those, who truly made it their Business to improve their Reason to the Height; to free themselves from the Superstition, which overwhelmed the whole World; to search out the Obligations of Morality, and the Will of God their Creator; to obey it sincerely themselves, as far as they could discover it by the Light of Nature; and to encourage and exhort others to do the like; were but a *very few Names*. The Doctrine of far the greatest Part of the Philosophers consisted plainly in nothing but Words, and Subtlety, and Strife, and empty Contention; and did not at all amend even their own Manners; much less was fitted to reform the World. *Their*

*Scholars, as Aristotle * excellently describes them, thought themselves greatly improved in Philosophy, and that they were become gallant Men, if they did but hear, and understand,*

* Ἄλλ' οἱ πολλοὶ ταῦτα μὲν
καὶ πράττεισιν· ἐπὶ δὲ τὸν λόγον κα-
ταφεύγουσιν οἷον· φιλοσοφεῖν,
καὶ ἔτι ἔσσεσθαι σπουδαῖοι·
ὁμοῖον τι ποιεῖν τοῖς καμνουσιν,
οἱ τῶν ἱατρῶν ἀκούουσι μὲν ἐπι-
μελῶς, ποιούσι δ' οὐδὲν τῶν προσασσομένων. ὥσπερ ἔν οὐδ' ἐκεῖνοι εὖ ἔξουσιν τὸ
σῶμα, οὕτω θεωρεῖσθαι οὐδ', οὕτοι τὴν ψυχὴν, οὕτω φιλοσοφούντες. *Aristot.*
Ethic. lib. 2. cap. 3.

and

and learn to dispute about Morality; though it had no Effect at all, nor Influence upon their Manners. Just as if a sick Man should expect to be healed by hearing a Physician discourse, though he never followed any of his Directions. Undoubtedly, said he, the Mind of the one was exactly as much improved by such Philosophy, as the Health of the other's Body by such Physic. And no Wonder the Generality of the common Hearers judged of their own Improvement in Philosophy by such false Measures, when the enormous Viciousness of the Lives of the Philosophers themselves made it plainly appear,

that * their Art was not so much intended and fitted for the Reformation of Mens Manners, as to be an *Exercise of Wit and Subtlety*, and an *Instrument of Vain-Glory*. Excepting perhaps *Socrates* and *Plato*, and some others of that Rank, this Account is too plainly true of the greatest Part of the Philosophers. The Argument

is too unpleasant to instance in Particulars. Whoever pleases may, in *Diogenes Laertius* and other Writers, find Accounts enough of the Lewdness and unnatural Vices of most of the Philosophers. 'Tis a Shame for Us so much as to speak of those Things which were done of them, not only in secret, but even in the most public Manner. I shall here only add the Judgment of *Cicero*, a Man as able to pass a right Judgment in this Matter as ever lived.

Do you think, says † he, that these Things [meaning the Precepts of Morality] had any Influence upon those Men, (excepting only a very few of them) who taught, and writ, and disputed about them? No; Who is there of all the Philoso-

* *Inclusos [Philosophos] in Angulis, facienda præcipere, quæ ne ipsi quidem faciunt qui loquuntur; & quoniam se a veris actibus removerunt, apparet eos exercendæ linguæ causa, vel advocandi gratia, artem ipsam Philosophiæ reperisse. Lactant. lib. 3.*

† *Sed hæc eadem num censes apud eos ipsos valere, nisi admodum paucos, a quibus inventa, disputata, conscripta sunt? Quotus enim quisque Philosophorum invenitur, qui sit ita mora-*

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animo ac vita constitutus, ut ratio postulat; qui disciplinam suam non ostentationem scientiæ, sed legem vitæ putet; qui obtemperet ipse sibi, & decretis suis pareat? Videre licet multos, libidinum servos, &c. *Cic. Tusculan. Quæstion. lib. 2.*

phers, whose Mind and Life and Manners were conformable to right Reason? Who ever made his Philosophy to be the Law and Rule of his Life, and not a mere Boast and Show of his Wit and Parts? Who observed his own Instructions, and lived in Obedience to his own Precepts? On the Contrary, many of

them were Slaves to filthy Lusts, many to Pride, many to Covetousness, &c.

And those few of the Philosophers, who did indeed sincerely endeavour to reform Mankind, were yet themselves intirely ignorant of some Doctrines absolutely necessary to the bringing about that great End.

2. Those few extraordinary Men of the Philosophers, who did indeed in good Measure sincerely Obey the Laws of natural Religion Themselves, and made it their chief Business to instruct and exhort Others to do the same, were yet *Themselves intirely ignorant* of some Doctrines absolutely necessary to the bringing about this great End, of the Reformation and Recovery of Mankind.

In general: Having no Knowledge of the whole Scheme, Order, and State of Things, the Method of God's governing the World, his Design in Creating Mankind, the original Dignity of Human Nature, the Ground and Circumstances of Mens present corrupt Condition, the Manner of the Divine Interposition necessary to their Recovery, and the Glorious End to which God intended finally to conduct them: Having no Knowledge (I say) of all This; their whole Attempt to discover the

Truth of Things, and to instruct Others therein, was * like Wandering in the wide Sea without knowing whither they were to go, or which Way they were to take, or having any Guide to conduct them. And accordingly † the Wisest of them were never backward to confess their own Ignorance

* Errant ergo velut in mari magno, nec quo ferantur intelligunt; quia nec viam cernunt, nec ducem sequuntur. *Lactant. lib. 6.*

† Ex cæteris Philosophis, nonne optimus & gravissimus quisque confitetur, multa se ignorare; & multa sibi etiam

Ignorance and great Blindness : *That* * was hid from them, as it were in an unfathomable Depth : *That* † they were much in the Dark, and very dull and stupid, not only as to the profounder Things of Wisdom, but as to such Things also, which seemed very capable of being in great Part discovered : Nay, *That* even ‡ those Things, which in themselves were of all others the most Manifest, (that is, which, whenever *Made known*, would appear most obvious and evident) their natural Understanding was of itself as unqualified to find out and apprehend, as the Eyes of Bats to behold the Light of the Sun : *That* the very first and most necessary Thing of all, || the Nature and Attributes of God himself, were, notwithstanding all the general Helps of Reason, very difficult to them to find out in particular, and still more difficult to explain ; it being much ¶ more easy to say what God *was not*, than what he *was* : And finally, *that* the Method of instructing Men effectually, and making them truly Wise and Good, was a Thing § very obscure and dark, and difficult to be found out. In a Word ; *Socrates* himself always openly professed, that he pretended to be wiser than other Men, only in this one Thing, that he was duly sensible of his own

atque etiam esse discere.
Cic. Tusc. Quæst. 3.

* Ἐν βύθῳ ἀλήθεια.

† Tui ergo te, Cicero, libri arguunt, quam nihil a philosophia disci possit ad vitam. Hæc tua verba sunt : *Mihi autem non modo ad sapientiam cæci videmur ; sed ad ea ipsa, quæ aliqua ex parte cerni videantur, hebetes & obtusi.* Lactant. lib. 3.

‡ Ὡςπερ γὰρ καὶ τὰ τῶν νυκτιγίδων ὀρμαλία πρὸς τὸ φέγγος ἔχει τὸ μεθ' ἡμέραν, οὕτω καὶ τῆς ἡμετέρας ψυχῆς ὁ νοῦς πρὸς τὰ τῇ φύσει φανερώτατα πάντων.
Arist. Metaphys. lib. 2. c. 1.

|| Τὸν μὲν ἔν ποιητὴν καὶ πατέρα τῶδε τῶ παντός, εὐρεῖν τε ἔργον, καὶ εὐρονία λέγειν εἰς πάντας ἀδύνατον. *Plato in Timæo.*

Profecto eos ipsos, qui se aliquid certi habere arbitrantur, addubitare coget doctissimorum hominum de *maxima* re tanta dissensio. *Cic. de Natura Deor. lib. 1.*

¶ Utinam tam facilè vera invenire possem, quam falsa convincere. *Id. Ibid.*

§ Ἐπεὶ εὐξάμεθα μετ' ἐμοῦ. — Καί μοι δύσβαλός γέ τις τόπος φαίνεται καὶ ἐπίσκιος ἔστιν ἔν σκοτεινὸς καὶ δυσδιερευνήτος. *Plato de Republ. lib. 4.*

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See Plato Ignorance, and * believed, that it was merely for
in Apolo- that very Reason, that the Oracle pronounced him
gia Socra- the wisest of Men.
tes.

Particu- More particularly: The Manner in which God
larly, they might be acceptably worshipped, these Men were in-
were very tirely and unavoidably ignorant of. That God
ignorant in ought to be worshipped is, in the general, as evident
what man- and plain from the Light of Nature, as any Thing
ner God can be: But in what particular Manner, and with
might be what Kind of Service he will be worshipped, can-
acceptably not be certainly discovered by bare Reason. Obe-
worship- dience to the Obligations of Nature, and Imitation
ped. of the Moral Attributes of God, the wisest Philo-
sophers easily knew, was undoubtedly the most ac-
ceptable Service to God. But some external Ado-
ration seemed also to be necessary; and, how this
was to be performed, they could not with any Cer-
tainty discover. Accordingly, even the very best
of them complied therefore generally with the out-
ward Religion of their Country, and advised Others
to do the same; and so, notwithstanding all their
wise Discourses, they fell lamentably into the Prac-
tice of the most foolish Idolatry. *Lactantius* ob-

† Εἶπεν. ὁ δὴ τελευταῖον
ἰφθίμω. ὁ Κρίτων τῷ Ἀσ-
κληπιῷ ὀφείλομεν ἀλεκτερόνα·
ἀλλὰ ἀπόδοτε, καὶ μὴ ἀμελή-
σητε. *Plato in Phædone.*

Illud vero nonne summæ
vanitatis; quod ante mortem
familiares suos rogavit, ut
Æsculapio gallum, quem vo-
verat, pro se sacrarent. *Lac-
tant. lib. 3.*

serves, that *Socrates* himself, † at
the Conclusion of one of the bra-
vest Discourses that ever was
made by any Philosopher, super-
stitiously ordered a Sacrifice to
be offered for him to *Æscula-
pius*. But herein *Lactantius* was
certainly mistaken: For *Socrates*
undoubtedly spake this in *Mock-
ery* of *Æsculapius*; looking upon
Death as his truest Deliverance.

Plato, after having delivered very noble and al-
most Divine Truths concerning the Nature and
Attributes of the Supreme God,

† Πρῶτον μὲν, φημὲν, τιμὰς
ταῖς μετ' ὀλυμπίαις τε καὶ τοῖς

‡ weakly advises Men to worship
like-

likewise Inferior Gods, Dæmons, and Spirits; and dared not to condemn the Worshipping even of Statues also and Images, dedicated according to the Laws of their Country; as if the * Honour they paid to lifeless Idols could procure the Favour and Good-will of Superior Intelligences. And so † he corrupted and spoiled the best Philosophy in the World, by adding Idolatry to that Worship, which he had wisely and bravely before proved to be due to the Creator of all Things. After him, *Cicero*, the greatest and best Philosopher that *Rome*, or perhaps any other Nation, ever produced, allowed ‡ Men to continue the Idolatry of their Ancestors; advised them || to conform themselves to the superstitious Religion of their Country, in offering such Sacrifices to different Gods, as were by Law established; and § disapproves and finds Fault with the *Persian* Magi, for burning the Temples of the *Grecian* Gods, and asserting, that the whole Universe was God's Temple. In all which, he fondly contradicts himself, by ¶ inexcusably complying with the Practices of those Men, whom in many of his

dem illos, quas nos, urbes incolere voluerunt. *Id. ibid.*

§ Video te, Cicero, terrena & manufacta venerari. Vana esse intelligis, & tamen eadem facis, quæ faciunt ipsi, quos ipse stultissimos confiteris. — Si libenter errant etiam ii, qui errare se sentiunt, quanto magis vulgus indoctum? *Lactant. lib. 2.*

τὴν πόλιν ἔχοντας θεὸς, τὸν νοῦν ἄν τις θεοῖς ἄρτια καὶ δευτεῖα καὶ ἀριστερὰ νέμων, ὀρθοτατα τῆς εὐσεβείας σκοπεῖ τυγχάνοι. — Μετὰ θεὸς δὲ τέσδε, καὶ τοῖς δαίμοσιν ὅγ' ἐμφρων ὀργιάζοιτ' ἄν — — — — — Ἐπακαλεθεῖ δ' αὐτοῖς ἱδρύματα ἴδια πατρώων θεῶν κατὰ νόμον ὀργιαζόμενα. *Plato de Legib. lib. 4.*

* Τὰς μὲν γὰρ τῶν θεῶν ὀργῶντες σαφῶς, τιμῶμεν τῶν δὲ εἰκόνας ἀγάλματα ἱδρυσάμενοι, ἐς ἡμῖν ἀγάλλεσσι, καίπερ ἀψυχὰς ὄντας, ἐκείνης ἡγέμεθα τὰς ἐμψυχὰς θεὸς πολλὴν διὰ ταυτ' εὐνοίαν καὶ χάριν ἔχειν. *Plato de Legib. lib. 11.*

† Τὰ Πλάτωνι ἐκ ἀπειθάνους μὲν εἰρημένα, οὐ μὴν καὶ διέθεντο τὸν φιλόσοφον ἀξίως καὶ αὐτῶ ἀναστραφῆναι ἐν τῇ πρὸς τὸν ποιητὴν τῶν ὅλων εὐσεβείᾳ, ἣν ἔχρη μὴ νοθεύειν, μηδὲ μιάνειν τῇ εἰδωλολατρείᾳ. *O. ig. advers. Cels. lib. 6.*

‡ A Patribus acceptos Deos placet coli. *Cic. de Legib. lib. 2.*

|| Item illud ex institutis Pontificum & Aruspicum non mutandum est, quibus hostiis immolandum cuiq; Deo. *Id. ibid.*

¶ Nec sequor Magos Persarum, quibus auctoribus *Xerxes*, inflammâsse templa Græciæ dicitur, quod parietibus includerent deos, quorum hic mundus omnis templum esset & domus. Melius Græci atq; nostri, qui, ut augerent pietatem in Deos, eas-

Id. ibid.

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Writings he largely and excellently proves to be extremely Foolish upon account of those very Practices. And to mention no more, (for indeed those of a lower Rank, the *Minuter* Philosophers, as *Tully* calls them, are not worth the mentioning) That admirable Moralist *Epietetus*, who, for a true Sense of Virtue, seems to have had no Superior in

the Heathen World; even He also * advises Men to offer Libations and Sacrifices to the Gods, every one according to the Religion and Custom of his Country.

* Σπένδειν δὲ καὶ δύναι, καὶ
ἀπαρχεῖσθαι κατὰ τὰ πάτρια
ἐκαστῷ προσήκει. *Epietet. cap.*
38.

*And in
what Me-
thod God
would be
reconciled
to return-
ing Sinners.*

But *still more particularly* : That which, of all other Things, these best and wisest of the Philosophers were most absolutely and unavoidably ignorant of; and yet which, of all other Things, was of the greatest Importance for *Sinful* Men to know, was *The Method by which such, as have erred from the right Way, and have offended God, may yet again restore themselves to the Favour of God, and to the Hopes of Happiness.* From the Consideration of the Goodness and Mercifulness of God, the Philosophers did indeed *very reasonably hope*, that God would shew himself placable to Sinners, and might be some Way reconciled : But when we come to inquire more particularly, *what Propitiation* he will accept, and in *what Manner* this Reconciliation must be made : Here Nature stops, and expects with Impatience the Aid of some particular Revelation. That God will receive returning Sinners, and accept of Repentance instead of perfect Obedience, *They cannot certainly know*, to whom he has not declared that he *will* do so. For, though this be the most *probable* and *only* Means of Reconciliation that Nature suggests; yet, whether this will be alone sufficient, or whether God will not require something further, for the Vindication of his Justice, and of the Honour

nour and Dignity of his Laws and Government, and for the expressing more effectually his Indignation against Sin, before he will restore Men to the Privileges they have forfeited, they cannot be satisfactorily assured. For it cannot positively be proved from any of God's Attributes, that he is *absolutely obliged* to pardon all Creatures all their Sins at all Times, barely and immediately upon their Repenting. There arises therefore from Nature no *Sufficient* Comfort to Sinners, but anxious and endless Sollicitude about the Means of appeasing the Deity. Hence those divers Ways of Sacrificing, and numberless Superstitions, which over-spread the Face of the Heathen World, but were so little satisfactory to the wiser Part of Mankind, even in those Times of Darkness, that the more considering Philosophers could not forbear frequently declaring, that * they thought those Rights could avail little or nothing towards appeasing the Wrath of a provoked God, or making their Prayers acceptable in his Sight; but that something still seemed to them to be wanting, though they knew not what.

* See Plato's Alcibiades 2, throughout.

3. Some other Doctrines absolutely necessary likewise to the bringing about this great End of the Reformation of Mankind; though there was indeed so much Proof and Evidence of the Truth of them to be drawn from Reason, as that the best Philosophers could not by any Means be *intirely* ignorant of them; yet so much *Doubtfulness, Uncertainty, and Unsteadiness*, was there in the Thoughts and Assertions of these Philosophers concerning them, as could not but † very much diminish their proper Effect and Influence upon the Hearts and Lives of Men. I instance in the *Immortality of the Soul, the Certainty of a Future State, and the Rewards and Punishments to be*

And other Doctrines absolutely necessary in order to reform Mankind, the best Philosophers were very Doubtful and uncertain about.

† Præterea nihil apud eos certi est, nihil quod à scientia veniat; — & nemo paret, quia nemo vult ad incertum laborare. *Lactant. lib. 3.*

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distributed in a Life to come. The Arguments, which may be drawn from Reason, and from the Nature of Things, for the Proof of these great Truths, seem really (as I have before shewn) to come very little short of strict Demonstration : And accordingly the wisest Philosophers (as has likewise been shewn before) did indeed sometimes seem to have reasoned themselves into a firm Belief of them, and to have been fully convinced of their Certainty and Reality, even so far as to apply them to excellent Purposes and Uses of Life. But then, on the other Hand, a Man cannot without some Pity and Concern of Mind observe, how strangely at other Times the Weight of the same Arguments seems to have slipped (as it were) out of their Minds, and with what wonderful *Diffidence, Wavering, and Unsteadiness*, they Discourse about the same Things. I do not here think it of any very great Moment, that there were indeed some whole Sects of Philosophers, who absolutely denied the *Immortality of the Soul*, and peremptorily rejected all Kind of Expectation of a *Life to come* ; (though, to be sure, this could not but in some Measure shock the *common People*, and make them entertain some Suspicion about the Strength of the Arguments used on the other Side of the Question by wiser Men ; yet, I say) it cannot be thought of any very great Moment, that some whole Sects of Philosophers did indeed absolutely deny the *Immortality of the Soul* ; because these Men were weak Reasoners in other Matters also, and plainly low and contemptible Philosophers, in Comparison of those greater Genius's we are now speaking of. But that which I now observe, and which I say cannot be observed without some Pity and Concern of Mind, is this, that even those Great Philosophers themselves, the very Best and Wisest, and most Considerate of them that ever lived, notwithstanding the undeniable Strength of the

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and Revealed RELIGION.

the Auguments which sometimes convinced them of the Certainty of a *Future State*, did yet at other Times exprefs themselves with fo much Hesitancy and Unsteddiness concerning it, as, without Doubt, could not but extremely hinder the proper Effect and Influence which that most important Consideration ought to have upon the Hearts and Lives of Men. *I am now*, said * *Socrates*, a little before his Death, *about to leave this World; and ye are still to continue in it; which of us have the better Part allotted us, God only knows: †* Seeming to exprefs some Doubtfulness, whether he should have any Existence after Death, or not. And again, at the End of his most admirable Discourse concerning the Immortality of the Soul, *I would have you to know*, said ‡ he to his Friends who came to pay him their last Visit, *that I have great Hopes I am now going into the Company of Good Men; yet I would not be too peremptory and confident concerning it. But ||* if Death be only as it were a Transmigration from hence into another Place; and those Things, which are told us, be indeed true, that those who are dead to Us, do all Live there: Then, &c. So likewise Cicero, speaking of the same Subject: *I will endeavour*, saith § he, *to explain what you desire; yet I would not have you depend upon what I shall say, as certain and infallible; but I may guess, as other*
Men

* Ἐμοὶ μὲν ἀποθανεμένῳ, ὑμῖν βιωσομένοις· ὁπότεροι δὲ ἡμῶν ἔρχονται ἐπὶ ἀμείνον προὔγμα, ἀδελφὸν παντὶ πλὴν ἢ τῷ θεῷ.
Plato in Apolog. Socr.

† Quod præter Deos negat scire quenquam, scit ipse, utrum melius sit; nam dixit antè. Sed suum illud, nihil ut affirmet, tenet ad extremum. *Cic. Tusc. Quæst. lib. 1.*

‡ Νῦν δὲ εὖ ἴστε ὅτι παρ' ἀνδρας τε ἐλπίζω ἀφίξεισθαι ἀγαθός, καὶ τὸτο μὲν ἐκ ἀν' πάντο διίσχυρισαίμην. *Plato in Phæd.*

|| Εἰ δ' αὖ οἷον ἀποδημῆσαι εἰσιν ὁ θάνατος· ἐνθένδε εἰς ἄλλον τόπον, καὶ ἀληθῆς εἰσι τὰ λεγόμενα, ὥς ἄρα ἐπεὶ εἰσι πάντες οἱ τεθνεώτες, &c. *Plato in Apolog. Socrat.*

§ Ea, que vis, ut potero, explicabo; nec tamen quasi Pythius Apollo, certa ut sint & fixa quæ dixerò; sed ut homunculus unus e multis, probabilia conjectura sequens. Ultra enim quo progrediar, quam ut verisimilia videam, non habeo. *Cic. Tusc. Quæst. lib. 1.*

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Men do, at what shall seem most probable : And further than this I cannot pretend to go. Again :

* Harum sententiarum quæ vera sit, Deus aliquis viderit ; quæ verisimillima, magna Quæstio est. *Id. Ibid.*

*Which of those two Opinions, saith * he, [that the Soul is mortal, or that it is immortal] be True, God only knows ; which of them is most Probable, is a very Great Que-*

stion. And again, in the same Discourse, having brought all those excellent Arguments before-mentioned in Proof of the Immortality of the Soul :

† Etsi nihil nimis oportet confidere. Movemur enim sæpe aliquo acutè concluso : labamus mutamusque sententiam clarioribus etiam in rebus ; in his est enim aliqua obscuritas. *Id. Ibid.*

Yet we ought not, saith † he, to be over-confident of it ; for it often happens that we are strongly affected at first with an acute Argument, and yet, a little while after, stagger in our Judgment, and alter our Opinion, even in clearer Matters than these ; for these Things must be con-

fessed to have some Obscurity in them. And again :

I know not how, saith ‡ he, when I read the Arguments in Proof of the Soul's Immortality, methinks, I am fully convinced ; and yet after I have laid aside the Book, and come to think and consider of the Matter alone by my self, presently I find my self fallen again insensibly into my old Doubts.

From all which it appears, that, notwithstanding all the bright Arguments and acute Conclusions, and brave Sayings of the best Philosophers, yet Life and Immortality were || not fully and satisfactorily brought to Light by bare natural Reason ; but Men

|| Credebam facilè opinionibus magnorum virorum, rem gratissimam [*animæ immortalitatem*] promittentium magis quam probantium. *Senec. Epist. 102.*

Adeo omnis illa tunc sapientia Socratis, de industria venerat consultæ æquanimittatis, non de fiducia compertæ veritatis. Tertullian. de Anima.

still plainly stood in Need of some farther and more complete Discovery.

4. Those Things which the Philosophers were indeed the most *fully certain* of, and did in good Measure *understand*; such as the *Obligations of Virtue*, and the *Will of God in Matters of Morality*; yet they were never able *to prove and explain clearly and distinctly enough*, to Persons of all Capacities, in order to their complete Conviction and Reformation. *And those Things which they were indeed certain of, yet they were not able to prove and explain clearly and distinctly enough.* First, because most of their Discourses upon these Subjects have been rather speculative and learned, nice and subtle Disputes, than practical and universally useful Instructions. They proved, by strict and nice Argumentation, that the *Practice of Virtue is wise and reasonable, and fit to be chosen*; rather than that 'tis of *plain, necessary, and indispensable Obligation*; and were able to deduce the *Will of God*, only by such abstract and subtle Reasonings, as the Generality of Men had by no Means either Abilities or Opportunities to understand or be duly affected by. Their very Profession, and Manner of Life, led them to make their Philosophy rather * an Entertainment of leisure

Time, a Trial of Wit and Parts, an Exercise of Eloquence, and of the Art and Skill of good Speaking, than an Endeavour to reform the Manners of Men, by shewing them their plain and necessary Duty. And accordingly the Study of it was, as *Cicero* † himself observes, unavoidably confined to a Few, and by no Means fitted for the Bulk and common

* Profecto omnis istorum disputatio, quanquam uberri-
mos fontes virtutis & scientiæ contineat, tamen collata cum horum [qui rempublicam gubernant] actis perfectisque rebus, vereor ne non tantum videatur attulisse negotiis hominum utilitatis, quantum *Obletationem quandam Otii*. Cic. de Repub. fragm.

† Est, inquit Cicero, philosophia paucis contenta iudiciis, multitudinem consulto

ipsa fugiens.—Maximum itaque argumentum est, philosophiam neque ad sapientiam tendere, neque ipsam esse sapientiam; quod mysterium ejus, barba tantum celebratur & pallio. *Lactant. lib. 3.*

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Sort of Mankind; who, as they cannot judge of the true Strength of nice and abstract Arguments, so they will always be suspicious of some Fallacy in them. None * but Men of Parts and Learning, of Study and liberal Education, have been able to profit by the sublime Doctrine of *Plato*, or by the subtle Disputations of other Philosophers; whereas the Doctrine of Morality, which is the Rule of Life and Manners, ought to be plain, easy and familiar, and suited fully to the Capacities of all Men. *Secondly*, Another Reason why the Philosophers were never able to prove and explain, clearly and distinctly enough, even those Things of which they were the most Certain, to Persons of all Capacities, in order to complete their Conviction and

* Ὀλίγες μὲν ὤνησεν ἡ περικαλλὴς καὶ ἐπιτετηδευμένη Πλάτωνος^Θ λέξις πλείονας δὲ ἢ τῶν εὐτελέστερον ἅμα καὶ πραγματικῶς καὶ ἐποικασμένως τῶν πολλῶν διδασκάντων καὶ γραψάντων· ἔστι γὰρ ἰδεῖν, τὸν μὲν Πλάτωνα ἐν χερσὶ τῶν δοκούντων εἶναι φιλολόγων μόνων. *Orig. advers. Cels. lib. 6.*

Ἀγροικότερον εἰπὼν ὁ Ἰησους, τῷ θέλοντι τὸν χιτῶνά σου λαβεῖν, ἄφες καὶ τὸ ἱμάτιον, βιωφελέστερον κεκίνηκε τὸν λόγον καὶ παρέστησεν ἕτως εἰπὼν, ἢ ὡς ἐν τῷ Κρίτῳ Πλάτων, ὃ μὴδ' ἀκρίβειν ἰδιῶται δύνανται, ἀλλὰ μόγις οἱ τὰ ἐγκύκλια πρὸς τῆς σεμνῆς Ἑλληνικῆς φιλοσοφίας μεμαθηκότις. *Id. lib. 7.*

† Οὐκ ὅτι ἀλλότρια ἐστὶ τὰ Πλάτωνος διδάγματα τοῦ Χριστοῦ· ἀλλ' ὅτι ἐκ ἐστὶ πάντα ὁμοία, ὥσπερ ἐδὲ τὰ τῶν ἄλλων. — ἕκαστος^Θ γὰρ τις, ἀπὸ μέρους τῆς σπερματικῆς θείας λόγου τὸ συγγενὲς ὁρῶν, καλῶς ἐφθέγγετο. Οἱ δὲ τ' ἀναντία αὐτοῖς ἐν κυριωτέροις εἰρηκότες, οὐκ ἐπιστήμην τὴν ἀποπλὸν καὶ γνῶσιν τὴν ἀνέλεγον φαίνονται ἐσχηκέναι. *Justin. Apolog. 1.*

and yet they could never clearly and satisfactorily make out, upon what Principles originally, and for what

what End ultimately, this Choice was to be made, and upon what Grounds it was universally to be supported. Hence they perpetually * disagreed, opposed, and contradicted one another in all their Disputations to such a Degree, that St. *Austin*, somewhere out of *Varro*, reckons up no less than 280 Opinions concerning that one Question, *What* was the Chief Good or Final Happiness of Man. The Effect of all which Differences could not, without doubt, but be a mighty Hindrance to that Conviction, and general Influence, which That great Truth, in the Certainty whereof they All clearly agreed, (namely, that the Practice of *Virtue* was necessary and indispensable) ought to have had upon the Minds and Lives of Men. This whole Matter is excellently set forth by *Lactantius*: *The Philosophers*, saith † he, *take them All together, did indeed discover all the particular Doctrines of true Religion; but, because each one endeavoured to confute what the others asserted, and no One's single Scheme was in all its Parts consistent and agreeable to Reason and Truth, and none of them were able to collect into One whole and intire Scheme the several Truths dispersed among them All, therefore they were not able to maintain and defend what they had discovered.* And again, having set down a brief Summary of the whole Doctrine and Design of true Religion, from the Original to the Consummation of all Things: *This Intire Scheme*, says ‡ he, *because the Philosophers were ignorant of, therefore they were not able to compre-*

* Nec, quid defendere debeant, scientes; nec quid refutare. Incurfantque passim sine delectu omnia quæasserunt, quicunque dissentiunt. *Lactant. lib. 7.*

† Totam igitur veritatem, & omne divinæ religionis arcanum Philosophi attigerunt. Sed aliis refellentibus, defendere id, quod invenerant, nequiverunt; quia singulis ratio non quadravit; nec ea, quæ vera senserant, in summam redigere potuerunt. *Lactant. lib. 7.*

‡ Quam summam, quia Philosophi non comprehenderunt; nec veritatem comprehendere potuerunt; quam-

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rerè, quibus summa
constat, & viderint & ex-
plicaverint. Sed diversi ac
diversè illa omnia protule-
runt, non annectentes nec
causas rerum, nec consequen-
tias, nec rationes; ut sum-
mam illam, quæ continet uni-
versa, & compingerent & com-
plerent. *Lactant. lib. 7.*

Quod si extitisset aliquis
qui veritatem sparsam per
singulos, per sectasque diffu-
sam, colligeret in unum, ac
redigeret in corpus; is pro-
fecto non dissentiret a nobis.
Sed hoc nemo facere, nisi
veri peritus ac sciens, potest
Verum autem non nisi ejus
scire est, qui sit doctus a Deo.
Idem, ibid.

*bend the Truth; notwithstanding
that they saw and discovered, singly,
almost all the Particulars of which
the whole Scheme consists. But this
was done by different Men, and
at different Times, and in different
Manners; (with various Mixtures
of different Errors, in what every
one discovered of Truth singly)
and without finding the Connexion
of the Causes, and Consequences and
Reasons of Things; from the mu-
tual Dependencies of which, the
Completeness and Perfection of the
whole Scheme arises. Whereas, had
there been any Man, who could have
collected and put together in Order
all the several Truths, which were*

*taught singly and scatteredly by Philosophers of all the
different Sects, and have made up out of them One
Intire consistent Scheme; truly he would not have
differed much from Us Christians: But This it was
not possible for any Man to do, without having the
True System of Things first Revealed to him.*

*And those
Things
which they
were able
to prove
and ex-
plain clear-
ly and di-
stinctly
enough, yet
they had
not suffi-
cient Autho-
rity to in-
force in
Practice.*

5. Lastly, Even those Things, which the Phi-
losophers were not only Themselves certain of, but
which they have also been able to prove and ex-
plain to Others, with sufficient Clearness and Plain-
ness; such as are the most obvious and necessary
Duties of Life; they have not yet had Authority
enough to inforce and inculcate upon Mens Minds
with so strong an Impression, as to influence and
govern the general Practice of the World. The
Truths which they proved by speculative Reason,

* *Platonis documenta,
quamvis ad rem multum
conferant, tamen parum ha-*

** wanted still some more sensible
Authority to back them, and
make them of more Force and
Efficacy*

Efficacy in Practice; And the
 * *Precepts* which they laid down,
 however evidently reasonable and
 fit to be obeyed, seemed still to
 want Weight, and to be but the
 Precepts of Men. Hence † none
 of the Philosophers, even of those
 who taught the clearest and cer-
 tainest *Truths*, and offered the
 best and wisest *Instructions*, and
 enforced them with the strongest
Motives that could be, were yet
 ever able to work any remark-
 able Change in the Minds and
 Lives of any considerable Part
 of Mankind, as the Preaching
 of Christ and his Apostles unde-
 niably did. Nor does it appear
 in History that ‡ any Number of
Socrates's or *Plato's* Followers were
 convinced of the Excellency of
 true Virtue, or the Certainty of
 its final Reward, in such a Man-
 ner as to be willing to lay down
 their Lives for its Sake, as In-
 numerable of the Disciples of
 Christ are known to have done.
 In *Speculation* indeed it may per-
 haps seem possible, that, notwith-
 standing it must be confessed Phi-
 losophy cannot discover any com-
 plete and satisfactory Remedy for
past Miscarriages, yet the Precepts
 and Motives offered by the best
 Philosophers might at least be
 sufficient to amend and reform
 Mens Manners for the future.

U

But

bent *Firmitatis* ad pro-
 et implendam veritatem.
tant. lib. 7.

* Quid ergo? nihilne illi
 [Philosophi] simile præcipi-
 unt? Imo permulta, et ad
 verum frequenter accedunt.
 Sed nihil ponderis habent illa
 præcepta, quia sunt humana;
 et auctoritate majori, id est,
 divina illa, carent. Nemo
 igitur credit; quia tam se ho-
 minem putat esse qui audit,
 quam est ille qui præcipit.
Lactant. lib. 3.

† Εἴποιμι δ' ἂν ἀληθεύειν τὰς
 δυνηδέντας διαδεῖναι τὰς ἀκροα-
 τὰς τῶν λεγομένων ἔτω βιοῦντας,
 ὡς τῶν ἔτῳς ἔχόντων. Διατι-
 θεῖται Ἰουδαῖοι καὶ Χριστιανοὶ περὶ
 τῆς ἀπ' αὐτῶν καλεμένης μέλλου-
 αἰῶνος. — Δεικνύτω ἔν καὶ Κέλ-
 σῶς ἢ ὁ βελλόμενος, τίνες διετέ-
 θησαν περὶ αἰώνιων κολάσεων,
 ὑπὸ τῶν τελετῶν καὶ μυσαγωγῶν.
Origen. advers. Cels. lib. 8.

Παρά μὲν τοῖς Ἑλλήσιν εἰς τις
 Φαίδων, καὶ ἔκ οἷδα εἰ δεῦτερον.
 Καὶ εἰς Πολέμων, μεταβαλόντες
 ἀπὸ ἀσώτου καὶ μοχθηροῦ εἰς
 ἐφιλοσόφησαν· παρὰ δὲ τῷ Ἰησοῦ,
 ἔ μόνον τότε οἱ δώδεκα, ἀλλ' αἰεὶ
 καὶ πολλαπλασίους οἵτινες γενό-
 μνοι σωφρόνων χορός. *Idem. lib. 3.*

Da mihi virum qui sit ira-
 cundus, &c. Numquis hæc
Philosophorum, &c. *Lactant.*
lib. 3. See this Passage cited
above, page 135.

‡ Σωκράτης μὲν γὰρ ἑδὲς
 ἐπιστευθῆ ὑπὲρ τετῆς τῆς δογματι-
 αποδυνοκεν Χριστῷ δὲ τῷ καὶ
 ἀπὸ Σωκράτης ἀπὸ μέρες γνωθῆναι
 ἔ φιλόσοφοι ἔδὲ φιλόλογοι μόνον
 ἐπέσθησαν ἀλλὰ καὶ παντὶ ἡλικίᾳ
 ἰδιῶται καὶ δοξῆς καὶ φόβου καὶ
 θανάτου καὶ ἀφροσύνης. *Justin.*
Apoloq. 1.

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But in *Experience* and *Practice* it hath on the contrary appeared to be altogether impossible for Philosophy and bare Reason to reform Mankind effectually, without the Assistance of some higher Principle. For, though the bare natural Possibility of the Thing cannot indeed easily be denied,

* Nam si, consensu omnium Philosophorum, sapientiam nemo assequitur; in summis malis omnes sumus, quibus vos optimè consultum a Diis immortalibus dicitis. Nam ut nihil interest utrum nemo valeat, an nemo possit valere; sic non intelligo quid intersit, utrum nemo sit sapiens, an nemo esse possit. Cic. de Natura Deor. lib. 3.

yet, *in this Case*, (as Cicero excellently expresses * it) *in like Manner as in Physic, it matters nothing whether a Disease be such as that no Man does, or no Man can recover from it; so neither does it make any Differences whether by Philosophy no Man is, or no Man can be made wise and good.* So that, without some greater Help and Assistance, Mankind is plainly

left in a very bad State. Indeed, in the original uncorrupted State of Human Nature, before the Mind of Man was depraved with prejudicate Opinions, corrupt Affections, and vicious Inclinations, Customs, and Habits, right Reason may justly be supposed to have been a sufficient Guide, and a Principle powerful enough to preserve Men in the constant Practice of their Duty. But, in the present Circumstances and Condition of Mankind, the wisest and most sensible of the Philosophers themselves have not been backward to complain that they found the *Understandings* of Men so *dark and cloudy*, their *Wills* so *biased and inclined to Evil*, their *Passions* so *outrageous and rebelling against Reason*, that they looked upon the Rules and Laws of right Reason as very hardly practicable, and which they had very little Hopes of ever being able to persuade the World to submit to. In a Word, they confessed that Human Nature was *strangely corrupted*; and they acknowledged

and Revealed RELIGION.

ledged this *Corruption* to be a Disease whereof they knew not the true *Cause*, and could not find out a sufficient Remedy. So that the great Duties of Religion were laid down by them as Matters of *Speculation and Dispute*, rather than as the *Rules of Action*; and not so much urged upon the *Hearts and Lives of Men*, as proposed to the *Admiration* of those who thought them hardly possible to be effectually practised by the Generality of Men. To remedy all these Disorders, and conquer all these Corruptions, there was plainly wanting some extraordinary and supernatural *Assistance*; which was above the Reach of bare Reason and Philosophy to procure, and yet without which the Philosophers themselves were sensible there * could never be any truly Great Men.

* *Nemo unquam vir magnus sine Divino Afflatu fuit. Cicero.*

VII. For these Reasons there was plainly wanting a Divine Revelation to recover Mankind out of their universally degenerate State, into a State suitable to the original Excellency of their Nature. Which Divine Revelation both the Necessities of Men, and their natural Notions of God, gave them reasonable Ground to expect and hope for: As appears from the Acknowledgments which the best and wisest of the Heathen Philosophers themselves have made of their Sense of the Necessity and Want of such a Revelation; and from their Expressions of the Hopes they had entertained that God would some Time or other vouchsafe it unto them.

I. There was plainly wanting a Divine Revelation to recover Mankind out of their universal Corruption and Degeneracy; And, without such a Revelation, it was not possible that the World should ever be effectually reformed. For If (as has been before particularly shewn) the gross and stupid Ignorance, *A Divine Revelation absolutely necessary for the Recovery of Mankind.*

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Ignorance, the innumerable Prejudices and vain Opinions, the strong Passions and Appetites of Sense, and the many vicious Customs and Habits, which the Generality of Mankind continually labour under, make it undeniably too difficult a Work for Men of all Capacities to discover, every One for himself, by the bare Light of Nature, all the particular Branches of their Duty; but most Men, in the present State of Things, have manifestly Need of much Teaching and particular Instruction: *If* those who were best able to discover the Truth and instruct others therein, namely, the Wisest and Best of the Philosophers, were Themselves unavoidably altogether ignorant of some Doctrines, and very doubtful and uncertain of others, absolutely necessary to the bringing about that great *End*, the Reformation of Mankind: *If* those Truths, which they were themselves very certain of, they were not yet able to prove and explain clearly enough to vulgar Understandings: *If* even those Things, which they proved sufficiently, and explained with all Clearness, they had not yet Authority enough to enforce and inculcate upon Mens Minds with so strong an Impression as to influence and govern the general Practice of the World; nor pretended to afford Men any supernatural Assistance which yet was very necessary to so great a Work: And *If*, after all, in the Discovery of such Matters as are the great Motives of Religion, Men are apt to be more easily worked upon, and more strongly affected by good Testimony than by the strictest abstract Arguments; So that, upon the Whole, 'tis plain the Philosophers were never by any Means well qualified to reform Mankind with any considerable Success: *Then* there was evidently wanting some *particular Revelation* which might supply all these Defects: There was plainly a Necessity of some
particular

particular Revelation, to discover * in what Manner, and with what Kind of external Service, God might acceptably be worshipped: There was a Necessity of some particular Revelation, to discover what Expiation God would accept for Sin; by which the Authority, Honour, and Dignity of his Laws might be effectually vindicated: There was a Necessity of some particular Revelation, to † give Men full Assurance of the Truth of those great Motives of Religion, the Rewards and Punishments of a future State, which, notwithstanding the strongest Arguments of Reason, Men could not yet forbear doubting of: In fine, there was a Necessity of some particular Divine Revelation, to ‡ make the whole Doctrine of Religion clear and obvious to all Capacities, to add Weight and Authority to the plainest Precepts, and to furnish Men with extraordinary Assurances to enable them to overcome the Corruptions of their Nature. And, without the Assistance of such a Revelation, 'tis manifest it was not possible that the World could ever be effectually reformed. Ye may even give over, saith || Socrates, all Hopes of amending Mens Manners for the future, unless God be pleased to send you some Other Person to instruct you. And Plato, Whatever, saith § he, is set right and as it should be, in the present Evil State of the World, can be so only by the particular Interposition of God.

* Νομοθέτης ὅστις νῦν ἐπὶ οὐκ ἔστι μὴ τολμήσῃ καινολογεῖν θεοσέβειαν, ἥτις μὴ σαφὲς ἔχει τι, τρέψαι πόλιν ἑαυτῆ. — Μηδὲν τοπαράπαν εἰδῶς, ὥσπερ εἰδ' ὅν δυνατὸν εἰδέναι τῇ θνητῇ φύσει τῶν τοιούτων περὶ. Plato in Epinomide.

Τὰ γὰρ δὴ τοιαῦτα [θεῶν δεραπείας] ἐπ' ἐπιστάμεθα ἡμεῖς, οἰκίζοντές τε πόλιν εὐδελὶ ἄλλω πεισόμεθα εἰάν νῦν ἔχομεν, εὐδὲ χρησόμεθα ἐξηγητῇ, ἀλλ' ἢ τῷ πατρίῳ Θεῷ. Plato de Republ. 4.

† Τὸ μὲν ἀληθές, ὃ ξένης δι' ἡμετέρας ταῦτα ἔως ἔχειν, πολλῶν ἀμφισβητούντων, Θεὸς ἐστὶ. Plato de Legib. lib. 1.

‡ Τῆτο δὲ ἐν τὸ μέγῃ φαμεν φύσει κυριώτατον, καὶ δυνατὸν ὧν οἶον τε μάλιστα καὶ ἀρίστα μαθεῖν, εἰ διδάσκει τις ἄλλ' εἰδ' ἂν διδάξειεν, εἰ μὴ Θεὸς ὑφηγοῖτο. Plato in Epinomide.

|| Εἴτα τὸν λοιπὸν χρόνον καθεύδοντες διαλέλοιτε ἂν, εἰ μὴ τινα ἄλλον ὑμῖν ὁ Θεὸς ἐπιπέμψῃ κηδόμενον ὑμῶν. Plato in Apolog. Socratis.

§ Εὖ γὰρ χρὴ εἰδέναι, ὅ, τι περ ἂν σωθῇ τε καὶ γένηται οἷον δεῖ, ἐν τοιαύτῃ καίλασσει πολιτειῶν, Θεὸς μοῖραν αὐτὸ σωσαι. Plato de Republ. lib. 6.

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2. Since therefore there was plainly and confessedly wanting a *Divine Revelation* to relieve the Necessities of Men in their Natural State; And since no Man can presume to say, that 'tis inconsistent with any of the Attributes of God, or unbecoming the Wisdom of the Creator of all Things, to supply that Want; to reveal to his Creatures more fully the Way to Happiness; to make more particular Discoveries of his Will to them; to set before them in a clearer Light the Rewards and Punishments of a future State; to explain in what Manner he will be pleased to be worshipped; and to declare what Satisfaction he will accept for Sin, and upon what Conditions he will receive returning Sinners: Nay, since, on the contrary, it seems *more suitable* to our natural Notions of the Goodness and Mercy of God, to suppose that he should do all this than not, it follows undeniably, that it was most reasonable, and agreeable to the Dictates of Nature, to *expect* or *hope for* such a Divine Revelation. The Generality of the Heathen World, who were far more equal and less prejudiced Judges in this Matter than modern Deists, were so fully persuaded that the great Rules for the Conduct of Human Life must receive their Authority from Heaven, that their chief Law-givers thought it not a sufficient Recommendation of their Laws that they were agreeable to the Light of Nature, unless they pretended also that they received them from God. But I have no Need in this Argument to make Use of the Examples of Idolatrous Law-givers. The Philosophers themselves, the Best and Wisest, and the least Superstitious of them, that ever lived, were not ashamed to confess openly their Sense of the Want of a Divine Revelation; and to declare their Judgment that it was most natural and truly agreeable to right and sound Reason, to *hope for* something of that Nature.

There

There is, besides the several Places before cited, a most excellent Passage in *Plato* to this Purpose, one of the most remarkable Passages indeed in his whole Works, though not quoted by any that I have met with; which therefore I think highly worthy to be transcribed at large, as a just and unanswerable Reproach to all those who deny that there is any Want or Need of a Revelation.

*It seems best to me, saith * Socrates to one of his Disciples, that we expect quietly; nay, 'tis absolutely necessary that we wait with Patience 'till such Time as we can Learn certainly how we ought to behave ourselves both towards God and towards Men. When will that Time come, replies the Disciple; and who is it that will teach us this? For methinks I earnestly desire to see and know Who the Person is that will do it. It is one, answers Socrates, who has now a Concern for you. But, in like Manner as Homer relates that Minerva took away the Mist from before Diomedes's Eyes, that he might be able to distinguish one Person from another, so 'tis necessary that the Mist which is now before your Mind be first taken away, that afterwards you may learn to distinguish rightly between Good and Evil; for as yet you are not able to do it. Let the Person you mentioned, replies the Disciple, take away this Mist, or whatever else it be, as soon as he pleases: For*

* ΣΩΚ. Ἐμοὶ μὲν ἔν δοκεῖ
κράτιστον εἶναι, ἡσυχίαν ἔχειν.—
ἀναγκαῖον ἔν ἐστι περιμένειν, ἕως
ἂν τις μάθῃ ὡς δεῖ πρὸς Θεὸς καὶ
τῆς ἀνθρώπων διακεῖσθαι. ΑΛΚ.
Πότε ἔν παρέσαι ὁ χρόνος ἕτος,
ὦ Σωκράτης; καὶ τίς ὁ παιδεύων;
ἠδιστα γὰρ ἂν μοι δοκῶ ἰδεῖν τῆ-
τον τὸν ἀνθρώπων τίς ἐστι. ΣΩΚ.
Οὗτός ἐστιν, ὦ μέλε περὶ σοῦ.
Ἀλλὰ δοκεῖ μοι, ὥσπερ τῷ Διο-
μήδει φησὶ τὴν Ἀθηναίαν Ὀμηρος
ἀπὸ τῶν ὀφθαλμῶν ἀφελεῖν τὴν
ἀχλὺν, ὅφρ' εὖ γινώσκῃ ἡμῖν
Θεὸν ἢ δὲ καὶ ἀνδρᾶ, ἔτω καὶ σὺ
δεῖν ἀπὸ τῆς ψυχῆς πρῶτον ἀφε-
λῶντα τὴν ἀχλὺν, ἣ νῦν παρῆσα
τυγχάνει, τοῖηκαὶ αὐτ' ἡδὴ προσ-
φέρειν δὲ ὧν μέλλεις γινώσκεισθαι
ἡμῖν κακὸν ἢ δὲ καὶ ἐσθλόν νῦν μὲν
γὰρ οὐκ ἂν μοι δοκῆς δυνηθῆναι.
ΑΛΚ. Ἀφαιρέτω, εἴτε βέλεια,
τὴν ἀχλὺν, εἴτε ἄλλο τι ὡς ἐγὼ
παρεσκευασμαι μηδὲν ἂν φεύγειν
τῶν ὑπ' ἐκείνῃ προσασσομένων,
ὅστις παρ' ἐστὶν ὁ ἀνθρώπος, εἴγε
μέλλοιμι βελίων γενέσθαι. ΣΩΚ.
Ἀλλὰ μὴν κακεῖν θάυμαστὴν
ἔσθ' περὶ σε προθυμίαν ἔχει.
ΑΛΚ. Εἰς τότε τοίνυν καὶ τὴν
δυσίαν ἀναβαλλέσθαι κράτιστον
εἶναι μοι δοκεῖ. ΣΩΚ. Καὶ ὁρ-
θῶς γε σοὶ δοκεῖ ἀσφαλέστερον
γὰρ ἐστὶν, ἢ παρακινδυνεύειν τοσού-
τον κίνδυνον. ΑΛΚ. Τοῖς θεοῖς
δὲ καὶ σεφάνεσ καὶ τὰλλα πάντα
ταῖ

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ἐν τῇ τότε δώσομεν, ὅταν
τὴν ἡμέραν ἐλθούσαν ἴδω
ἢ ξέει δ' ἔτι διὰ μακρῶν χρόνων διελόν-
των. *Plato in Alcibiade 2.*

[If it be supposed that Socrates in this Passage means *Himself*, (which is very difficult) yet it nevertheless very lively represents the great Sense which the most considerate Heathens had of their Want of some Extraordinary Instruction.]

I am willing to do any Thing he shall direct, whosoever this Person be; so that I may but become a good Man. Nay, answers Socrates, That Person has a wonderful Readiness and Willingness to do all this for you. It will be best then, replies the Disciple, to forbear offering any more sacrifices 'till the Time that this Person appears. You judge

very well, answers Socrates; it will be much safer so to do, than to run so great a Hazard of offering Sacrifices, which you know not whether they are acceptable to God or no. Well then, replies the Disciple, we will Then make our Offerings to the Gods when That Day comes; And I hope, God willing, it may not be far off. And, in another Place, the same Author having given a large Account of that most excellent Discourse which Socrates made a little before his Death concerning the great Doctrines of Religion, the Immortality of the Soul, and the Certainty of a Life to come, he introduces one of his Disciples, replying in the following Manner:

* Ἐμοὶ γὰρ δοκεῖ ὡς Σώκρατες, περὶ τῶν τοιούτων ἴσως ὥσπερ καὶ σοὶ· τὸ μὲν σαφὲς εἰδέναι ἐν τῷ νῦν βίῳ ἢ ἀδύνατον εἶναι, ἢ παυχάλεπον τί· τὸ μὲντοι αὐτὰ [leg. τὰ] λεγόμενα περὶ αὐτῶν μὴ ἔχει παντὶ τρόπῳ ἐλέγχειν καὶ προαφίστασθαι πρὶν αὖτε πανταχῇ σκοπῶν ἀπειρῶν τις, παννυμαλθακῶς εἶναι ἀνδρὸς. [Note, that Ficinus, in his Translation of this Passage, as if the Word *ἐχέ* was to be repeated *ἀπὸ τῆς κοινῆς* with *προαφίστασθαι*, writes absurdly *non desistere* instead of *desistere*.] Δεῖν γὰρ περὶ αὐτῶν ἢ γὰρ τι τούτων διαπραξασθαι.

*I am, faith * he, of the same Opinion with you, O Socrates, concerning these Things, that to discover the certain Truth of them, in this present Life, is either absolutely impossible for us, or at least exceeding difficult. Yet not to inquire with our utmost Diligence into what can be said about them, or to give over our Inquiry before we have carried our Search as far as possible, is the Sign of a mean and low Spirit. On the contrary, we ought therefore, by all Means, to do one of these two Things; either,*

and Revealea RELIGION.

either, by hearkening to Instruction, and by our own diligent Study, to find out the Truth; or, if that be absolutely impossible, then to fix our Foot upon that which to human Reason, after the utmost Search, appears best and most probable; and, trusting to That, venture upon that Bottom to direct the Course of

ἢ μαθεῖν ὅπῃ ἔχει, ἢ εὐρεῖν εἰ ταῦτα ἀδύνατον, τὸν γὰρ βέλτιστον τῶν Ἀνθρώπων Λόγων λαβόντα καὶ δυσελεγκτότατον, ἐπὶ τοῦτο ὀχοῦμενον, ὥσπερ ἐπὶ σχεδίας, κινδυνεύοντα διαπλεῦσαι τὸν βίον· εἰ μὴ τις δύναϊο ἀσφαλέστερον καὶ ἀκινδυνότερον, ἐπὶ βέλταιστέροις ὀχήμασι, ἢ Λόγῳ Θεῷ τινός, διαπορευθῆναι. Plato in Phædone.

our Lives accordingly, Unless a Man could have still some more sure and certain Conduct to carry him through this Life, such as a Divine Discovery of the Truth would be. I shall mention but one Instance more, and that is of *Porphyry*; who, though he lived after our Saviour's Time, and had a most inveterate Hatred to the Christian Revelation in particular, yet * confesses in general that he was sensible there was wanting some *universal Method of delivering Mens Souls*, which no Sect of Philosophy had yet found out.

* Quum autem dicit *Porphyrius*, in primo de *Regressu Animæ* libro, nondum receptum in unam quandam sectam quæ universalem viam animæ contineat liberandæ, nondumq; in suam notitiam ean-

dem viam historiali cognitione perlatam; procul dubio confitetur, esse aliquam; sed nondum in suam venisse notitiam. Ita ei non sufficiebat quicquid de anima liberanda studiosissime didicerat, sibi que, vel potius aliis, nosse ac tenere videbatur. Sentiebat enim adhuc sibi deesse aliquam præstantissimam auctoritatem, quam de re tanta sequi oporteret. *Augustin. de Civitate Dei, lib. 10. c. 32.*

3. This Sense of the Ancient and Wisest Philosophers is much departed from by *Modern Deists*, who contend that there was no Want, no Need of a Revelation; that Philosophy and right Reason was of itself sufficiently able to instruct and preserve Men in the Practice of their Duty; and that nothing was to be expected from Revelation. But, besides what has been already intimated concerning the extreme Barbarity of the present Heathen World,

The Unreasonable-ness of Modern Deists, in denying the Want and Use of a Revelation.

and

and what the Philosophers both Greeks and Latins have confessed concerning the State of the more civilized Nations wherein they lived, I think we may safely appeal even to our Adversaries themselves, *whether* the Testimony of *Christ*, (without considering at present what Truth and Evidence it has) concerning the Immortality of the Soul, and the Rewards and Punishments of a Future State, have not had (notwithstanding all the Corruptions

of Christians) visibly in Experience and Effect a * greater and more powerful Influence upon the Lives and Actions of Men, than the Reasonings of all the Philosophers that ever were in the World: *Whether* credible Testi-

mony, and the Belief and Authority of Revelation, be not in itself as it were a Light held to the Consciences of stupid and careless Men; and the most natural and proper Means, that can be imagined, to awaken and rouse up many of those who would be little affected with all the strict Arguments and abstract Reasonings in the World: And, to bring this Matter to a short Issue, *whether*, in Christian Countries, (at least where Christianity is professed

in any tolerable Degree of Purity) the Generality even † of the meaner and most vulgar and ignorant People have not Truer and Worthier Notions of God, more just and right Apprehensions concerning his Attributes and Perfections, a deeper Sense of the Difference of Good and Evil, a greater Regard to moral Obligations and to the plain and most

* Οὐκ ὀλίγες, Ἕλληνας καὶ βαρβάρους, σοφους καὶ ἀνοήτους, μέχρι θανάτου ἀγωνίζεσθαι ὑπὲρ Χριστιανισμοῦ ἢ αὐτὸν μὴ ἐξομῶσιν· ὅπερ εὐδαίμων ὑπὲρ ἄλλης δόγματός ἐστιν. *Origen. advers. Cels. lib. 1.*

† Ὡς μὴ ἐνὶ κατὰ τὸ παλαιὸν βραχεῖς τινας καὶ ἀειδμενῶς ληπτέας, ὁρᾶς περὶ Θεοῦ φέρειν δόξας· ἀλλὰ μυρία πλήθη βαρβάρων. *Euseb. Demonstrat. Evangel. lib. 3. c. 3.*

Αἱ δὲ τὰ Θεοῦ Χριστοῦ μαθητεύσαντες ἐκκλησίαι, συνεξεταζόμεναι ταῖς αὐτῶν παροικῶσι δῆμων ἐκκλησίαις. ὡς φωνῆς εἰσιν ἐν κόσμῳ. Τίς γὰρ οὐκ ἂν ὁμολογήσῃ, καὶ τὰς χεῖρας τῶν ἀπὸ τῆς ἐκκλησίας καὶ συγκρίσει τῶν βελιόνων ἐλάττω, πολλῶν κρείττων τυγχάνειν τῶν ἐν τοῖς δῆμοις ἐκκλησιῶν.

[Note, this Passage is both corruptly printed πολλῶν instead of πολλῶ; and also the Sense of it hurt by an imperfect Translation. *Orig. advers. Cels. lib. 3. Edit. Cantab. pag. 128.*]

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most necessary Duties of Life, and a more firm and universal Expectation of a Future State of Rewards and Punishments, than, in any Heathen Country, any considerable Number of Men were ever found to have had.

It may here perhaps be pretended, by Modern Deists, that the great Ignorance and undeniable Corruptness of the whole Heathen World has always been owing, not to any absolute Insufficiency of the Light of Nature itself, but merely to the Fault of the several particular Persons, in not sufficiently improving that Light; and that Deists, *Now*, in Places where Learning and right Reason are cultivated, are well able to discover and explain all the Obligations and Motives of Morality without believing any Thing of Revelation. But this, even though it were true, (as, in the Sense they intend, it by no Means is; because, as has been before shewn, there are several very necessary Truths not possible to be discovered with *any Certainty* by the bare Light of Nature; But) supposing it, I say, to be true, that all the Obligations and Motives of Morality *could possibly* be discovered and explained clearly by the mere Light of Nature alone, yet even This would not at all prove that there is no Need of Revelation. For, whatever the bare *Natural Possibility* was, 'tis certain, *in Fact*, the Wisest *Philosophers of Old** never were able to do it to any effectual Purpose, but always willingly acknowledged that they still wanted some higher Assistance. And, as to the great Pretences of *Modern Deists*, 'tis to be observed, that the Clearness of Moral Reasonings was much improved, and the Regard to a Future State very much increased, even in Heathen Writers, after the Coming of *Christ*. And almost all the Things that are said wisely and truly by Modern Deists are plainly borrowed from That

Revelation

*The great
Necessity
and Use of
Divine Re-
velation.*

* See an
excellent
Passage
of Cicero
to this Pur-
pose, cited
above,
page 152.

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Revelation which they refuse to embrace; and, without which, they could never have been able to have said the same Things. Now indeed, when our whole Duty, with its true Motives, is clearly revealed to us, its Precepts appear plainly agreeable to Reason; and Conscience readily approves what is Good, as it condemns what is Evil: Nay, after our Duty is thus made known to us, 'tis easy not only to see its Agreement *with* Reason, but also to begin and deduce its Obligation *from* Reason. But, had we been utterly destitute of all revealed Light, then, to have discovered our Duty in all Points, with the true Motives of it, merely by the Help of Natural Reason, would have been a Work of Nicety, Pains, and Labour, like groping for an unknown Way in the obscure Twilight. What Ground have any Modern Deists to imagine, that, if they themselves had lived without the Light of the Gospel, they should have been wiser than *Socrates*, and *Plato*, and *Cicero*? How are they certain they should have made such a right Use of their Reason as to have discovered the Truth *exactly*, without being any Way led aside by Prejudice or Neglect? If their Lot had been among the *Vulgar*, how are they sure they should have been so happy, or so considerate, as not to have been involved in that Idolatry and Superstition which overspread the whole World? If they had joined themselves to the *Philosophers*, which Sect would they have chosen to have followed? And what Book would they have resolved upon to be the adequate Rule of their Lives and Conversations? Or, if they should have set up for *Themselves*, how are they certain they should have been skilful and unprejudiced enough to have deduced the several Branches of their Duty, and applied them to the several Cases of Life by Argumentation and Dint of Reason? 'Tis *one Thing* to see that those Rules
of

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of Life, which are beforehand plainly and particularly laid before us, are perfectly agreeable to Reason: And *another Thing* to find out those Rules merely by the Light of Reason, without their having first been any otherwise made known. We see that even many of those who profess to govern their Lives by the *plain written Rule* of an *instituted and revealed Religion* are yet most miserably ignorant of their Duty: And how can any Man be sure he should have made so good Improvement of his Reason as to have *understood it perfectly*, in all its Parts, without any such Help? We see that many of those who profess to believe firmly *that great and everlasting Happiness* which Christ has promised to Obedience, and *that great and eternal Misery* which Christ has threatened to Disobedience, are yet hurried away, by their Lusts and Passions, to transgress the Conditions of that Covenant to which these Promises and these Threatenings are annexed: And how can any Man be sure he should be able to overcome those great Temptations, if these mighty Motives were *less distinctly known*, or less *powerfully enforced*? But suppose he could, and that by Strength of Reason he could demonstrate to himself these Things with all *Clearness and Distinctness*, yet could *All Men* do so? Affuredly all Men are not *equally capable* of being *Philosophers*, though all Men are *equally obliged* to be *Religious*. At least thus much is certain, that the Rewards and Punishments of another World, the great Motives of Religion, cannot be so *powerfully enforced*, to the influencing the Lives and Practice of all Sorts of Men, by one who shall undertake to demonstrate the Reality of them by abstract Reasons and Arguments, as by one who, shewing sufficient Credentials of his having been himself in that other State, shall assure them of the Truth and Certainty of these Things. But, after all, the Question does not really lie here. The

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The Truth, at the Bottom, is plainly This: All the great Things that Modern Deists affect to say of *right Reason*, as to its Sufficiency in discovering the Obligations and Motives of *Morality*, is only a Pretence to be made Use of when they are opposing *Christianity*. At other Times, and in Reality, they have no hearty Regard for *Morality*, nor for the natural Evidences of the Certainty of a Future State. They are willing enough to believe that Men perish absolutely at Death; And so they have no Concern to support effectually the Cause of Virtue, nor care to make out any consistent Scheme of Things; but unavoidably recur, in Truth, to *downright Atheism*. At least, in the Manners of most of them, 'tis too plain and apparent that absolute Libertinism is the Thing they really aim at: And, however their Creed may pretend to be the Creed of Deists, yet almost always their Practice is the Practice of very Atheists.

*Yet God
was not
absolutely
Obliged to
afford Men
the Help
of such a
Revela-
tion.*

4. To return therefore to the Argument. From what has been said upon this Head, it appears plainly, that 'tis agreeable to the natural Hopes and Expectations of Men, that is, of Right Reason duly improved, to suppose God making some particular Revelation of his Will to Mankind, which may supply the undeniable Defects of the Light of Nature. And, at the same Time, 'tis evident that such a Thing is by no Means unworthy of the Divine Wisdom, or inconsistent with any of the Attributes of God; but rather, on the contrary, most suitable to them. Consequently, considering the manifold Wants and Necessities of Men, and the abundant Goodness and Mercy of God, there is great Ground, from Right Reason and the Light of Nature, to believe that God would not always leave Men wholly destitute of so needful an Assistance, but would at some Time or other actually afford it them. Yet it does not from hence at all follow, (as some have imagined) that God is *Obliged*

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to make such a Revelation. For then it must needs have been given in all Ages, and to all Nations; and might have been claimed and demanded as of Justice, rather than wished for and desired as of Mercy and condescending Goodness. But the fore-mentioned Considerations are such as might afford Men reasonable Ground to *Hope* for some Favour of this Kind, to be conferred at such Time, and in such Manner, and upon such Persons, as should seem best to Supreme Infinite Wisdom: At least, they might well dispose and prepare Men beforehand, whenever any Doctrine should come accompanied with just and good Evidence of its being such a Revelation, to believe and embrace it with all Readiness.

It has been made Use of, by a * modern Author, as his principal and strongest Argument against the Reasonableness of believing any Revelation at all, that 'tis confessed there has been no Revelation *universally* owned and embraced as such, either in all Ages, or by all Nations in any Age. He pretends to acknowledge, that, if the Doctrine of Christianity was *universally* entertained, he would not doubt of its being truly a Revelation of the Will of God to Mankind: But since, in Fact, there is no instituted Religion *universally* received as a Divine Revelation; and there are several Nations to whom the Christian Doctrine in particular was never so much as preached, nor ever came to their Knowledge at all; he concludes, that, what is not universal and equally made known to *All Men*, cannot be needful for *Any*; and consequently that there never was any real Want of a Revelation at all, nor any Ground to think any further Assistance necessary to enable Men to answer all the Ends of their Creation, than the bare Light of Nature. This is the Sum and Strength of this Author's Reasoning; and herein all the Deniers of Revelation agree with him. Now, (not to take Notice here, that

*Want of
Universa-
lity no suf-
ficient Ob-
jection a-
gainst the
Truth of
a Revela-
tion.*

** Oracles
of Reason,
page 197,
&c.*

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that 'tis by no Means impossible but all Men may be capable of receiving some Benefit from a Revelation which yet a great Part of them may have never heard of :) If these Mens Reasoning was true, it would follow, by the same Argument, that neither was *Natural Religion* necessary to enable Men to answer the Ends of their Creation. For, though all the Truths of Natural Religion are indeed certainly discoverable by the due Use of Right Reason alone, yet 'tis evident *All Men* are not indued with the same Faculties and Capacities, nor have they All equally afforded to them the same Means of making that Discovery; as these Gentlemen themselves, upon some Occasions, are willing enough to own, when they are describing the barbarous Ignorance of some poor Indian Nations: And consequently the Knowledge of Natural Religion being, in Fact, by no Means universal, it will follow that there is no great Necessity even of That; but that Men may do very well without it in performing the Functions of the Animal Life, and directing themselves wholly by the Inclinations of Sense: And thus these Gentlemen must at last be forced to let go all moral Obligations, and so recur unavoidably to absolute Atheism. The Truth is: As God was not obliged to make all his Creatures equal; to make Men Angels, or to indue All Men with the same Faculties and Capacities as Any; So neither is he bound to make All Men capable of the *same Degree* or the *same Kind* of Happiness, or to afford All Men the very same *Means and Opportunities* of obtaining it. There is Ground enough, from the Consideration of the manifest Corruption of Human Nature, to be so far sensible of the Want of a Divine Revelation, as that Right Reason and the Light of Nature itself will lead a wise and considerate Man to think it very probable that the infinitely merciful and good God may actually vouchsafe to afford Men some such supernatural Assistance: And consequently

quently such a Person will be very willing, ready, and prepared to entertain a Doctrine which shall at any time come attended with just and good Evidence of its being truly a Revelation of the Will of God. But it does not at all from hence follow, either that God is absolutely bound to make such a Revelation, or that, if he makes it, it must equally be made to All Men; or that, since in Fact it is not made to All, therefore there is no reason to believe that there is any Need or any Probability of its being made to Any.

VIII. *There is no other Religion now in the World, but the Christian, that has any just Pretence or tolerable Appearance of Reason to be esteemed such a Divine Revelation: And therefore, if Christianity be not true, there is no Revelation of the Will of God at all made to Mankind.*

This Proposition will easily be granted by all *Modern Unbelievers*; and therefore I need not be particular in the Proof of it.

The *Mahometan* Religion was founded by a vicious Person, proposes ridiculous and trifling Doctrines to be believed, was propagated merely by Violence and Force of Arms, was confirmed by no public and uncontestable Miracles, promises vain and sensual Rewards to its Professors, and is every Way incompassed with numberless such Absurdities and Inconsistencies, (as those who have given us Accounts of the Life of *Mahomet*, and the Nature of his Religion, have abundantly made out, and is sufficiently evident even from the *Alcoran* itself) that there is no great Danger of *Its* imposing upon rational and considerate Men.

The *Jewish* Religion was founded wholly upon the Expectation of a Messiah to come; and the Time of his Appearance was limited by such plain and determinate Prophecies, that what Difficulties soever there may be in computing the very nice and

Of the Mahometan Religion.

Of the Jewish Religion.

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exact Time of their Completion ; or what different Periods ſcever may be fixed, from whence to begin ſeveral Computations ; yet the Time of their being fulfilled is now, in all poſſible Ways of computing, ſo very far elapſed, that, if the *Chriſtian* Doctrine be falſe, there is no Suppoſition left, upon which the *Jewiſh* Religion can, with any Colour of Reaſon, be believed to be true.

It being evident therefore, that either the Chriſtian Revelation is true, or elſe (how great Want ſoever there may be of it) there is no ſuch Thing as Revelation at all : It remains that I proceed to conſider what *poſitive and direct Evidence* there is to prove the actual Truth of this Divine Revelation.

IX. *The Chriſtian Religion, conſidered in its primitive Simplicity, and as taught in the Holy Scriptures, has all the Marks and Proofs of being actually and truly a Divine Revelation, that any Divine Revelation, ſuppoſing it was true, could reaſonably be imagined or deſired to have.*

*The Marks
of a Reli-
gion coming
from God.*

The neceſſary Marks and Proofs of a Religion coming from God are theſe : *Fiſt*, That the *Duties* it enjoins, be all ſuch as are agreeable to our natural Notions of God, and perfective of the Nature, and conducive to the Happineſs and Well-being of Men : And that the *Doctrines* it teaches be all ſuch, as, though not indeed diſcoverable by the bare Light of Nature, yet, when diſcovered by Revelation, may be conſiſtent with, and agreeable to, ſound and unprejudiced Reaſon. For, otherwiſe, no Evidence whatſoever can be of ſo great Force to prove that any Doctrine is True, as its being either contradictory in itſelf, or wicked in its Tendency, is to prove that it muſt neceſſarily be Falſe. *Secondly*, For the ſame Reaſon, the *Motives* likewiſe, by which it is recommended to Mens Belief and Practice,

Practice, and all the peculiar *Circumstances* with which it is attended, must be such as are suitable to the excellent Wisdom of God, and fitted to amend the Manners, and perfect the Minds of Men. *Lastly*, It must moreover be *positively and directly proved* to come from God, by such certain *Signs and Matters of Fact*, as may be undeniable Evidences of its Author's having actually a Divine Commission. For otherwise, as no Evidence can prove a Doctrine to come from God, if it be either Impossible or Wicked in itself; so, on the other Hand, neither can any Degree of Goodness or Excellency in the Doctrine itself make it certain, but only highly probable, to have come from God, unless it has moreover some positive and direct Evidence of its being actually Revealed.

The intire Proof therefore of this Proposition, must be made by an Induction of Particulars, as follows:

X. First, *The Practical Duties which the Christian Religion enjoins, are all such, as are most agreeable to our natural Notions of God, and most perfective of the Nature, and conducive to the Happiness and Well-being of Men: That is, Christianity even in this single Respect, as containing alone, and in one consistent System, all the wise and good Precepts, (and those improved, augmented, and exalted to the highest Degree of Perfection) that ever were taught singly and scatteredly, and many Times but very corruptly, by the several Schools of the Philosophers; and this without any Mixture of the fond, absurd, and superstitious Practices of any of those Philosophers; ought to be embraced and practised by all rational and considering Deists, who will act consistently, and steddily pursue the Consequences of their own Principles, as at least the best Scheme and Sect of Philosophy, that ever was set up in the World; and highly probable, even*

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though it had no external Evidence, to be of Divine Original.

*The Propo-
sition pro-
ved, in the
several In-
stances of
Duty.*

This Proposition is so very evident, that the greatest Adversaries of the Christian Institution have never been able to deny it any otherwise, than by confounding the Inventions of Men, the superstitious Practices of particular Persons, or the corrupt Additions of certain particular Churches or Societies of Christians, with the pure and simple Precepts of the Gospel of Christ. In all those Instances of Duty, which pure and uncorrupt Christianity enjoins, the Proposition is manifest and altogether undeniable. The Duties of *Love, Fear, and Adoration*, which the Christian Religion obliges us to render unto *God*, are so plainly incumbent upon us from the Consideration of the excellent Attributes of the Divine Nature, and our Relation to him as our Creator and Preserver, that no Man who considers, can think himself free from the Obligations which our Religion lays upon him to practise these Duties, without denying the very Being of God, and acting contrary to the Reason, and all the natural Notions of his own Mind. Its placing the true and acceptable Worship of God, not so much in any positive and ritual Observances, as in approaching him with pure Hearts and undefiled Bodies, with unfeigned Repentance for all past Miscarriages, and sincere Resolutions of constant Obedience for the future; in praying to him for whatever we want, and returning him our most hearty Thanks for whatever good Things we receive, with such Dependence and Humility, such Submission, Trust and Reliance, as are the proper Affections of dutiful Children; all this is plainly most agreeable to our Natural Notions and Apprehensions of God. And that the Prayers of sinful and depraved Creatures, sincerely repenting, should be offered up to God, and become prevalent with him, through and by
the

the Intercession of a *Mediator*, is very consonant to right and unprejudiced Reason, as I shall have Occasion to shew more particularly hereafter, when I come to consider the Articles of our *Belief*. Again, The Duties of *Justice, Equity, Charity, and Truth*, which the Christian Religion obliges us to exercise towards *Men*, are so apparently reasonable in themselves, and so directly conducive to the Happiness of Mankind, that their unalterable Obligation is not only in great Measure deducible from the bare Light of Nature and right Reason, but even Those Men also, who have broken through all the Bonds of natural Religion itself, and the original Obligations of Virtue, have yet thought it necessary, for the Preservation of Society, and the Well-being of Mankind, that the Observation of these Duties, to some Degree, should be enforced by the Penalties of human Laws. And the additional Improvements, which our Saviour has made to these Duties, by commanding his Disciples *to* be as it were Lights *Matt. v.* in the World, and Examples of good Works to all *16, &c.* Men; *to* be so far from injuring others, that on the contrary they should not indulge themselves in any Degree of Anger or Passion; *to* seek Reconciliation immediately upon any Difference or Offence that may arise; *to* bear Injuries patiently, rather than return Evil for Evil; *to* be always willing to forgive one another Their Trespases, as they all expect Forgiveness at the Hands of God; *to* be Kind and Charitable to all Men; *to* assist readily, and be willing to do all good Offices, not only to their Friends, but even to their bitterest Enemies also; in a Word, *to* raise their Virtue and Goodness far above the common Practice of Men, extending their Charity universally in Imitation of the Goodness of God himself, who maketh the Sun to rise on the Evil and on the Good, and sendeth Rain on the Just and on the Unjust: These Precepts, I say, are such, as no un-

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prejudiced Philosopher would have been unwilling to confess were the utmost Improvements of Morality, and to the highest degree Perfective of human Nature. In like Manner, The Duties of *Sobriety, Temperance, Patience, and Contentment*, which our Religion enjoins us to practise in *Ourselves*, are so undeniably agreeable to the inward Constitution of human Nature, and so perfective of it, that the principal Design of all true Philosophy has ever been to recommend and set off these Duties to the best Advantage; though, as the Philosophers themselves have always confessed, no Philosophy was ever able to govern Mens Practice effectually in these Respects. But the additional Precepts, and the new Weight and Authority, which our Saviour has added to his Instructions of this Kind; teaching his Disciples to govern their very Thoughts, Desires, and Inclinations; to contemn and get above all the Desires of this present World, and to set their Affections principally upon that which is to come; These are the Things, which, when the Christian Religion was in its primitive and purest State, worked Men up actually to such a Pitch of chearful and generous Obedience to the Laws of God, and taught them to obtain such a complete Victory over the World, and over all the Desires and Appetites of Sense, as the best Philosophers have acknowledged their Instructions were never able to do. Lastly, Even those *positive and external Observances* (the *Two Sacraments*) which are instituted in the Christian Religion, as Means and Assistances to keep Men stedfast in the Practice of those *great and moral Duties* which are the *weightier Matters of the Law*; even those positive Institutions (I say) are so free from all Appearance of Superstition and Vanity, and so wisely fitted to the End for which they were designed, that no Adversaries of Christianity have ever been able to object any Thing at all against the Things

Matt. v.
28.
Matt. vi.
19, 24, &c.

v. 11
23, 24

Things themselves, but only against certain Corruptions and Superstitions, which some, who call themselves Christians, have, directly in Opposition to the true Design of Christianity, introduced and annexed to them. For what reasonable Man can pretend to say, that 'tis any Way unreasonable or Superstitious for every Member of the Society to be solemnly admitted into his Profession, by a plain and significant Rite, intitling him to all the Privileges, and charging him with all the Obligations, which belong to the Members of that Society as such? which is the Design of *One* of the *Sacraments*: Or, that 'tis unreasonable and Superstitious for Men frequently to commemorate with all Thankfulness the Love of their greatest Benefactor, and humbly and solemnly to renew their Obligations and Promises of Obedience to him? which is the Design of the *Other*.

Let now any impartial Person judge, whether this be not a wise and excellent Institution of *practical* Religion, highly conducive to the Happiness of Mankind, and worthy to be established by a Revelation from God, when Men had confessedly corrupted themselves to such a Degree, that not only the Light of Nature and right Reason was altogether insufficient to restore true Piety, but even That Light itself (as *Cicero* * expressly acknowledges) no where appeared. Let any impartial Person judge, whether a Religion that tends thus manifestly to the Recovery of the rational Part of God's Creation, to restore Men to the Imitation and Likeness of God, and to the Dignity and highest Improvement of their Nature, has not within itself an intrinsic and very powerful Evidence of its being truly Divine. Let any one read the *fifth, sixth and seventh Chapters of St. Matthew's Gospel*, and judge if they do not, as it were, set before his Eyes such a lovely Image

This a great Evidence of a Religion coming from God.

* — ut Naturæ Lumen nusquam appareat. *Cic. Tusc. Quæst. lib. 3.* See this Passage cited before at large, Page 125.

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*nam ipsam, & tantam
faciem honesti; quæ si
oculis cerneretur, mirabiles a-
mores, ut ait Plato, excitaret
Sui. Cic. de Offic. lib. 1.*

and Representation of true Vir-
tue, as *Plato* * said could not but
charm Men with the highest De-
gree of Love and Admiration
imaginable. In a Word, let any
Man of an honest and sincere Mind consider, whe-
ther That practical Doctrine has not even *in itself*
the greatest Marks of a Divine Original, wherein
whatsoever Things are *true*, whatsoever Things are
Phil. iv. 8. *honest*, whatsoever Things are *just*, whatsoever Things
are *pure*, whatsoever Things are *lovely*, whatsoever
Things are *of good Report*, if there be any *Virtue*, if
there be any Thing *praise-worthy*; all these, and
these only, are the Things that are earnestly re-
commended to Mens Practice. What wise Precept
was ever delivered by any Philosopher of any Sect,
which is not more plainly laid down by our Savi-
our and his Apostles? And not only so, but inforced
moreover with greater Efficacy and Strength? found-
ed upon nobler and more consistent Principles?
urged with greater Weight and Authority? and
pressed with more powerful and affecting Argu-
ments? Nay, neither is This all the Difference,
even in Respect barely of the Excellency of the
Doctrine itself. For the Philosophers taught indeed
many excellent moral Truths; but some upon one
Occasion, and upon one Set of Principles, some upon
another; and every one of them were mistaken in
some Instances of Duty, and mingled particular
Superstitions and false Notions with their good In-
structions, and built their *Doctrine* upon no sure
Foundation of consistent Principles; and All of
them (as has been before shewn) were very imper-
fect and deficient, and far from being able to make
up an intire and complete Scheme of the whole Du-

† Οὐχ ὅτι ἀλλότρια ἐστὶ
τὰ Πλάτωνος διδάγματα, τοῦ
Χριστοῦ ἀλλ' ὅτι οὐκ ἐστὶ πάντη

ty of Man in all Cases. But now,
† *to* put together all the wise and
good Precepts that ever were de-
livered

livered by any wise Men of any Sect, and in any Age; *to* improve and exalt every one of them, to the highest possible Degree of Excellency and Perfection; *to* separate and lay aside all the Superstitious Opinions and Practices that had been mixed by all or any of the different Sects of Philosophers, or Teachers of Religion in any Nation, with their respective moral Instructions; and *to* supply all those Doctrines, wherein both moral Philosophy, and the additional Institutions of all Religions in the World, had in the Whole been

hitherto altogether deficient; and all this, in one plain, intire, and regular System, upon the Foundation of certain and consistent Principles; This is the peculiar Character of the Christian Institution; and all this cannot, with any Colour of Reason, be imagined to have ever been done by any Man, but one sent immediately from God. Upon this Consideration alone, all sincere Deists (if any such there be) who really are what they pretend to be, who believe the Being and Attributes of God, and are firmly convinced of the Obligations of Virtue and natural Religion, and the Certainty of a Future State of Rewards and Punishments, must needs by their own Principles be strongly inclined to embrace the Christian Religion; to believe, at least to *hope* confidently, that a Doctrine so plainly fitted to recover Men out of their universally corrupt Estate, and restore them to the Knowledge and Favour of God, is truly Divine; and to entertain it with all Chearfulness, as what in itself has those manifold Marks of Goodness and Perfection, which are themselves sufficient to satisfy a good Man, that it can-

not

ὁμοία ὥσπερ οὐδὲ τὰ τῶν αἰ-
—ἐκαστοῦ γὰρ τις, ἀπὸ μέ-
ρους τῆς σπερματικῆς θείου λό-
γου τὸ συγγενὲς ὁρῶν, καλῶς
ἐφ' ἐξέταστο. — ὅσα οὖν παρὰ πᾶσι
καλῶς εἰρηλαί, ἡμῶν τῶν χριστιαν-
ῶν ἐστίν. *Justin. Apolog. 1.*

Quod si extitisset aliquis,
qui veritatem sparsam per
singulos, per Sectasque diffu-
sam, colligeret in unum ac
redigeret in corpus; is pro-
fecto non dissentiret a nobis.
Sed hoc nemo facere, nisi
veri peritus ac sciens, potest.
Verum autem non nisi ejus
scire est, qui sit doctus a Deo.
Lactant. lib. 7.

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si vel casu id effice-
certissime philosophare-
tur; & quamvis non posset
divinis testimoniis illa defen-
dere, tamen seipsam veritas
illustraret suo lumine. *Lactant.*
lib. 7.

not be any Thing else than a Re-
velation from God, even * though
it had wanted all those outward
Proofs, and divine and miraculous
Testimonies, which shall hereafter
be mentioned in their proper Place.

XI. Secondly, *The Motives by which the Christian Religion inforces the Practice of the Duties it enjoins, are such as are most suitable to the excellent Wisdom of God, and most answerable to the natural Expectations of Men.*

Of the
acceptability
of
true Re-
pentance.
as a Mo-
tive to O-
bedience.

1. The *Acceptableness of true Repentance*, in the Sight of God, and the certain *Assurance of Pardon* upon such Repentance, which the Christian Religion affords us, is a most powerful and necessary *Motive* to frail and sinful Creatures to encourage and support them effectually in the Practice of their Duty. 'Tis indeed in general evidently most agreeable to right Reason, and to Mens natural Notions of God, to believe him *placable*, and merciful, and willing to forgive. But since at the same Time it cannot be proved by any Arguments from Reason, that God is *absolutely obliged* to forgive; and 'tis confessedly evident, that it becomes the Supreme Governor of the Universe to vindicate the Honour and Authority of his Laws and Government, to give some Evidences of his Hatred and Indignation against Sin, and sometimes by Instances of Severity to prevent Sinners from abusing his Mercy and Patience; no less than that 'tis agreeable to his infinite Wisdom and Goodness to suffer his Anger to be by some Means appeased: No Motive in this Case can be imagined more expedient and powerful to encourage Sinners to return to the Practice of their Duty, and to persuade them to continue therein immoveable for the future; nothing can be imagined more seasonable and satisfactory to the Mind
of

of Man, and more agreeable to the excellent Wisdom of God, and worthy of the supreme and infinitely merciful Governor of all Things, than such a positive Declaration of the *Acceptableness of sincere Repentance*, and such an authentic Assurance of *Pardon and Forgiveness* thereupon, as under the Christian Dispensation the Divine Goodness and Mercy has found Means to afford unto us, in such Manner as is at the same Time abundantly consistent with the Honour and Dignity of the Laws of God, and with his irreconcilable Hatred against all Unrighteousness and Sin.

2. *That divine and supernatural Assistance*, which, *Of the divine Assistance, as another Motive to* under the Christian Dispensation, they who sincerely endeavour to obey the Will of God, have Encouragement to hope for, upon all necessary Occasions, is another powerful *Motive to* support Men *Obedience.* effectually in the Practice of their Duty. The wisest of the Philosophers were so far sensible of the great Corruption and Depravity of Human Nature in its present State; they were sensible that such was the Carelessness, Stupidity, and Want of Attention, of the greater Part of Mankind; so many the early Prejudices and false Notions taken in by evil Education; so strong and violent the unreasonable Lusts, Appetites and Desires of Sense; and so great the Blindness, introduced by superstitious Opinions, vicious Customs, and debauched Practices through the World; that (as has been before shewn) they themselves openly confessed, they had very little Hope of ever being able to reform Mankind with any considerable great and universal Success, by the bare Force of Philosophy and right Reason; but that, to produce so great a Change, and inable Men effectually to conquer all their corrupt Affections, there was Need of some supernatural and divine Assistance, or the immediate

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diate Interposition of God himself. Now This *divine Assistance* is vouchsafed to Men under the Christian Dispensation in such a Manner, as (from what has been already said concerning the Judgment of the Wifest of the Ancient Philosophers in this Matter) appears to be undeniably agreeable to the natural Expectations of right Reason, and suitable to the best and worthiest Notions that Men have ever by the Light of Nature been able to frame to themselves concerning the Attributes and Perfections of God. *If ye, says our Saviour, being Evil, know how to give Good Gifts unto your Children; how much more shall your heavenly Father give the holy Spirit to them that ask him?* The Effect of this divine Assistance evidenced itself in a very visible and remarkable

Luke xi.
13.

* Da mihi virum, qui sit iracundus, maledicus, effrenatus; paucissimis Dei verbis tam placidum, quam ovem, reddam. Da libidinosum, &c. *Lactant. lib. 3.*

Παρά μὲν τοῖς Ἕλλησιν εἰς τις, &c. Origen. advers. Cels. lib. 1. See this Passage cited above, page 151.

Manner in the primitive Times, by * the sudden, wonderful, and total Reformation of far greater Numbers of wicked Men, than ever were brought to Repentance by the Teaching and Exhortations of all the Philosophers in the World. And even at this Day, notwithstanding all the Corruptions introduced among Christians,

I think it can hardly be denied by any Unbelievers of Revelation, but that there are among us many more Persons of all Conditions, who worship God in Sincerity, and Simplicity of Heart, and live in the constant Practice of all Righteousness, Holiness, and true Virtue, than ever were found in any of the most civilized Nations, and most improved by Philosophy in the heathen World.

Of the clear Discovery of future Rewards and Punishments, as another Motive to Obedience.

3. The *Rewards and Punishments* which the Christian Religion proposes, to Obedience or Disobedience, are a *Motive*, perfectly agreeable to Mens natural Hopes and Fears, and worthy of God to make known by positive and express Revelation.

For

For since 'tis confessedly fuitable to the divine Wisdom to make Variety of Creatures, indued with very different Powers and Faculties, and capable of very different Kinds and Degrees of Improvement; and since all rational Creatures, by Reason of that natural Liberty of Will which is essentially necessary to their being such, cannot but be capable of exalting and improving their Nature by the Practice of Virtue and the Imitation of God, and on the contrary of depraving and debasing their Nature by the Practice of Vice and Alienation of themselves from God; It follows undeniably (as has been before shewn by a more particular Deduction) that 'tis highly agreeable to the Light of Nature and to right Reason to suppose, that God, the Supreme Governor and Disposer of all Things, will finally make a just and fuitable Distinction between his Creatures, by the Distribution of proportionable Rewards and Punishments. Nevertheless, both the Truth itself of these final Rewards and Punishments was so far called in Question, and rendered doubtful and uncertain, by the Disputations even of the Wisest Philosophers that ever lived; and those who did in general believe the Truth and Certainty of them, had yet so very blind and obscure Notions of What Nature and Kind they were to be, having their Imaginations strangely prejudiced with poetical Fictions and fabulous Stories, that the setting this Matter clear and right, and the supplying this single Defect in the Light of Nature, was a Thing highly worthy of Divine Revelation: It being plainly a very different Thing, and of very different Force as to the influencing Mens Actions, for Men to be able to argue themselves into a *reasonable Expectation* of future Rewards and Punishments, and to be *certainly assured* of the Reality of them by exprefs Testimony of Divine Revelation. And accordingly, by Divine
Revelation

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Revelation in the Gospel, this Defect of the Light of Nature *Is* now actually supplied in such a Manner; Life and Immortality *are* so brought to Light; and the Wrath of God *is* so revealed from Heaven against all Ungodliness and Unrighteousness of Men; that this very Thing, the clear and distinct and consistent Account which the Gospel gives us of these final Rewards and Punishments, (which, though indeed in themselves so absolutely necessary, that without them no tolerable Vindication could be made of the Attributes of God, yet neither by the Light of Nature, nor by any positive Institution of Religion, excepting only the Christian, were they ever so *clearly* and *plainly* represented to Mankind, as to have their full and proper Effect upon the Hearts and Lives of Men;) This very Thing (I say) the clear, distinct, and consistent Account, which the Gospel gives us of these final Rewards and Punishments, is itself no contemptible Argument of the Truth and Divine Authority of the Christian Revelation. By the certain Knowledge of these Rewards and Punishments it is, that the Practice of Virtue is now established upon a sure Foundation. Men have now abundantly sufficient Encouragement, to support them in their Choice of Virtue, and in their constant Adherence to it, in all Cases, and under all Circumstances that can be supposed. There is now sufficient Weight on the Side of Virtue, to enable Men to conquer all the Temptations of the Devil, the Flesh, and the World; and to despise the severest Threatenings, even Death itself. *This is the Victory that overcometh the World, even our Faith.* The only Difficulty in this Matter, arising from the *Duration* of the final Punishment of the Wicked, shall be considered when I come to discourse of the Articles of our *Belief*.

XII. Thirdly, *The peculiar Manner and Circumstances,*

stances, with which the Christian Religion enjoins the Duties, and urges the Motives before-mentioned, are exactly consonant to the Dictates of sound Reason, or the unprejudiced Light of Nature, and most wisely perfective of it.

For what can be more agreeable to the Light of Nature, and more evidently perfective of it, than to have those Duties which Nature hints at only in general, explained fully and largely, and urged particular, and inculcated upon the meanest Capacities with great Weight and Authority, and exemplified in the Lives of holy Persons proposed as Patterns for our Imitation? What can be more perfective of the Light of Nature, than to have those great Motives of Religion, the Rewards and Punishments of a Future State which Nature only obscurely points at, described to us most plainly, affectionately, and lively? What can be more perfective of the Light of Nature, than to have the Means of atoning for Sin, which Nature discovers only the Want of, plainly declared and exhibited to us? What can be more perfective of the Light of Nature, than such a Discovery of the Heinousness of Sin and the Necessity of Holiness, as the Death of Christ and the Purity of the Gospel do make unto us? In fine, What can more effectually perfect the Religion of Nature, than the gathering together the Worshipers of the True God into One Body? the causing them to enter into solemn Obligations to live suitably to their Holy Profession? the giving them gracious Assurances that true Repentance shall be accepted for what is past, and sincere renewed Obedience for the future? the uniting them by a few positive Rites in one Religious as well as Civil Communion, for mutual Assistance and Improvement? and the establishing a certain Order or perpetual Succession of Men, whose constant Business it may be to explain the great Duties of Religion to Persons of meaner Capacities; to urge and enforce the Practice

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Prælice of them; to set before Men the Reasons of their Duty, and the Necessity of it; to shew them clearly and impartially the Danger of neglecting it, and the great Advantage of performing it sincerely; in a Word, to instruct the Ignorant, and to admonish the Wicked; to reduce those that err, to comfort the Doubting, to reprove the Obstinate; and to be Instruments of conveying to Men all proper Assistances, to inable them to perform their whole Duty effectually?

If these Things be the Ordinances of One, who came to contradict the Dictates of right Reason, and not to perfect the Law of Nature, but to destroy it; then let all wise Men for ever forsake the Assemblies of Christians, and profess themselves again Disciples of the Philosophers. But if these Things be perfectly agreeable to Nature and right Reason, and tend exceedingly to the supplying the Deficiencies thereof; then let none, under Pretence of maintaining *Natural* Religion, revile and blaspheme the *Christian*, lest they be found Liars unto God.

*An Answer
to the Ob-
jection
drawn
from the
Divisions
among
Christians.*

The many *Contentions* indeed, about Opinions of great Uncertainty and little Importance, which, to the very great Scandal of Christianity, have, in several Ages of the Church, been with unreasonable Zeal kept up, instead of promoting the universal Interest of true practical Religion and Virtue, have, it must be confessed, given some *Occasion* to the Enemies of our most holy Religion to blaspheme and revile both It, and the Teachers of it. But, though such Things as these have indeed afforded them too plausible an *Occasion*, yet they have not given them any just *Reason* so to do. For the acknowledged Corruption of a Doctrine or Institution, in any particular *Part* or *Respect*, is by no Means a weighty or real Objection against the Truth of the *Whole*. And there has always been Extant a sufficient Rule, to inable sincere Persons, in the midst
of

Of the greatest Disputes and Contentions, to distinguish the *Doctrine which is of God* from the *Opinions of Men*; the Doctrine of Christ having been plainly and fully delivered in our Saviour's own Discourses, and in the Writings of his immediate Followers the Apostles, who cannot with any Reason be imagined either to have misrepresented it, or to have represented it imperfectly. But, besides, I think it can hardly be denied even by our Adversaries themselves, but that in all Times and Places, wherein Christianity has been professed in any tolerable Degree of Purity; whatever Contentions and Disputes may have arisen about particular and perhaps *unnecessary* Doctrines; yet the great, the most necessary, and *fundamental* Doctrines of Religion; concerning God and Providence; concerning the gracious Method of God's Reconciliation with penitent Sinners; concerning the Necessity of true Piety, Righteousness, and Sobriety; concerning a Judgment to come, and the final Reward of the Righteous, and the Punishment of wicked Men, in such a Manner as will effectually vindicate both the Justice and Goodness, the Wisdom and Honour of God; these Things (I say) have, notwithstanding all Differences concerning smaller Matters, been nevertheless at the same Time universally and constantly taught, pressed and inculcated upon Persons of all Capacities, by the earnest and continual Preaching of all the Ministers of the Gospel, with an Effect infinitely more considerable and visible, both in Extent and Duration, than by the Teaching of any Heathen Philosophers that ever lived. Which shews undeniably the Excellency at least, if not the Divine Authority of the Christian Institution, in this particular Respect.

XIII. Fourthly, *All the* [Credenda, or] Doctrines, *which the true, simple, and uncorrupted Christian Religion*

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gion

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gion teaches; (that is, not only those plain Doctrines which it requires to be believed as Fundamental and of Necessity to eternal Salvation, but even All the Doctrines which it teaches as Matters of Truth; are, tho' indeed many of them not discoverable by bare Reason unassisted with Revelation, yet, when discovered by Revelation, apparently most agreeable to sound unprejudiced Reason, have every one of them a natural Tendency, and a direct and powerful Influence, to reform Mens Minds, and correct their Manners; and do together make up an infinitely more consistent and rational Scheme of Belief, than any that the Wisest of the ancient Philosophers ever did, or the cunningest of modern Unbelievers can invent or contrive.

Of the One
Supreme
God.

1. That there is One only living and true God; existing of himself, by the Necessity of his own Nature; absolutely Independent, Eternal, Omnipresent, Unchangeable, Incorruptible; without Body, Parts or Passions; of infinite Power, Knowledge, and Wisdom; of perfect Liberty and Freedom of Will; of infinite Goodness, Justice, and Truth, and all other possible Perfections; so as to be absolutely Self-sufficient to his own infinite and unalterable Happiness: This is not only the first and principal Article of the Christian Faith, but also the first and most evident Truth that the Light of Nature itself teaches us, being clearly demonstrable, upon certain and undeniable Principles of right Reason.

Of the
Onl. be-
getten Son
of God.

2. That this Supreme Self-Existent Cause and Father of all Things did, before all Ages, in an incomprehensible Manner, by his Almighty Power and Will, beget or produce a Divine Person; styled

* Θεός ἐκ Θεοῦ, in Contra-
distinction to Αὐτόθεος.

the Logos, the Word, or Wisdom,
or Son, of God; * God of God;
in whom dwells the Fulness of

Divine Perfections, (excepting absolute Supremacy, Independency, or Self-Origination) being the Image
of

of the Invisible God; the Brightness of his Father's Glory, and the express Image of his Person, having been in the Beginning with God, Partaker with him of his Glory before the World was; the Upholder of all Things by the Word of his Power; and himself over all (by Communication of his Father's Glory and Dominion) God blessed for ever: This Doctrine (I say) though not indeed discoverable by bare Reason, yet, when made known by Revelation, appears plainly very consistent with right Reason, and ('tis manifest) contains nothing that implies any Manner of Absurdity or Contradiction in it.

Indeed if any Men, pretending to be *wise above* and beyond *what is written*, have at any Time given such Explications of the *Manner* how the Son of God derived his Being from the Father, or have offered such Accounts of his *Nature and Attributes*, as can by any just and necessary Consequence be reduced to imply or involve any Contradiction (which perhaps many of the * Schoolmen have but too justly been accused of doing) such Explications are without all Controversy false, and very injurious to Religion. But as this Doctrine is delivered in *Scripture*, I think, there is nothing in it in any Degree contrary to right Reason, as I have elsewhere endeavoured to shew in a *particular Discourse*, to which I refer the Reader.

Divinity out of their own Brains, as Spiders do Cobwebs out of their own Bowels, have started a thousand Subtilties about this Mystery, such as no Christian is bound to trouble his Head withal; much less is it necessary for him to understand those *Niceties*, which we may reasonably presume that they who talk of them did themselves never thoroughly understand; and, least of all, is it necessary to believe them. *Archbishop Tillotson's Sermon concerning the Unity of the Divine Nature.*

It were to be wished, that some *Religionists* did not here symbolize too much with the *Atheists*, in affecting to represent the *Mystery* of the Christian *Trinity*, as a Thing directly contradictory to all human Reason and Understanding. *Cudworth's System, Page 560.*

* It is not to be denied but that the Schoolmen, who abounded in Wit and Leisure, though very few among them had either exact Skill in the Holy Scriptures, or in Ecclesiastical Antiquity, and the Writings of the ancient Fathers of the Christian Church: I say, it cannot be denied but that these speculative and very acute Men, who wrought a great Part of their

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Now the same that is said of the *Son* may, in like Manner, with *little Variation*, be, very agreeably to right Reason, understood concerning the *Original Proceſſion* or *Manner of Derivation* of the *Holy Spirit* likewise from *the Father*.

Of the
Creation
of the
Universe.

Heb. i. 2.
Eph. iii. 9.
Col. i. 16.

John i. 3.

3. *That* the Universe, the Heavens and the Earth, and all Things that are therein, were Created and Made by God; and this through the Operation of his Son, That Divine *Word*, or *Wisdom* of the Father; *by whom*, the Scripture says that God made the Worlds; that *by him* God created all Things; that *by him* were all Things created, that are in Heaven, and that are in Earth, Visible and Invisible, whether they be Thrones or Dominions, or Principalities or Powers; all Things were created by him and for him, and he is before all Things, and by him all Things consist; that all Things were made by him, and without him was not any Thing made that was made: All this likewise is very agreeable to sound and unprejudiced Reason. For that neither the Whole, nor any Part of the World; neither the Form, nor Motion, nor Matter of the World; could exist of itself, by any Necessity in its own Nature, is abundantly demonstrable from undeniable Principles of Reason, as has been shewn in my former Discourse. Consequently, both the whole World, and all the Variety of Things that now exist therein, must of Necessity have received both their Being itself, and also their Form and Manner of being, from God the alone Supreme and Self-existent Cause, and must needs depend upon his Good-pleasure every Moment, for the Continuance and Preservation of that Being. Accordingly, if we set aside the *Epicureans*, (whose absurd Hypothesis has long since been given up even by all Atheists themselves) and some very few others, who with no less Absurdity (as I have also at large shewn) contended that the World was in its present Form Self-existent and Necessary;

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Necessary ; All the Philosophers of all Ages (even * not excepting those who held the *Eternity* of the * See former Volume, p. 31, 32. World) have unanimously agreed in this great Truth, that the World evidently owes both its Being and Preservation to God the Supreme Cause and Author of all Things. And then, that God made the World *by* the Operation of his *Son* ; though this could not indeed be known certainly without express Revelation, yet is it by no Means incredible, or contrary to right Reason. For, to the Judgment of Reason, 'tis one and the same Thing, whether God made the World immediately by himself, or mediately by the Ministration of a Second Principle. And what *Plato* and his Followers have said concerning that Eternal *Noûs* or Mind, whom they frequently style *Δημιουργός* the Minister or Workman *by whom* God framed all Things, proves undeniably thus much at least, that the Doctrines delivered in Scripture concerning this Matter, cannot be rejected as inconsistent and irreconcilable with right Reason.

4. *That*, about the Space of 6000 Years since, *the Earth was without Form and Void*, that is, a confused *Chaos*, out of which God framed this beautiful and useful Fabric we now inhabit, and stocked it with the Seeds of all Kinds of Plants, and formed upon it *Man*, and all the other Species of Animals it is now furnished with, is also very agreeable to right Reason. For though the precise Time indeed, when all this was done, could not now have been known exactly, without Revelation, yet, even at this Day, there are remaining many considerable and very strong rational Proofs, which make it exceedingly probable, (separate from the Authority of Revelation) that this present Frame and Constitution of the Earth cannot have been of a very much longer Date. The universal *Tradition* delivered down from all the most ancient Nations of the World, both learned and barbarous ; the constant

Of the Formation of the Earth. Gen. i. 2.

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and agreeing *Doctrine* of all ancient Philosophers and Poets, concerning the Earth's being formed, within such a Period of Time, out of Water or a Chaos ; the manifold *Absurdities and Contradictions* of those few Accounts, which pretend to a much greater Antiquity ; the *Number of Men*, with which the Earth is at present inhabited ; the *late Original of Learning, and all useful Arts and Sciences* ; the *Impossibility*, that universal Deluges, or other Accidents, should at certain long Periods have oft-times destroyed far the greatest Part of Mankind, with the Memory of all former Actions and Inventions, and yet never have happened to destroy them All ; the Changes that must necessarily fall out naturally in the Earth, in vast Length of Time, by the Sinking and Washing down of Mountains, the Consumption of Water by Plants, and innumerable other such-like Accidents ; these, (I say) and many more Arguments, drawn from Nature, Reason, and Observation, make That Account of the Time of the Earth's Formation exceedingly probable in itself, which from the Revelation delivered in Scripture-History we believe to be certain.

*Of the
continual
Govern-
ment of
Provi-
dence,*

5. That the same God who created all Things by the Word of his Power, and upholds and preserves them by his continual Concourse, does also by his All-wise *Providence* perpetually govern and direct the Issues and Events of Things ; takes Care of this lower World, and of all, even the smallest Things, that are therein ; disposes Things in a regular Order and Succession in every Age, from the Beginning of the World to its final Period ; and inspects, with a more particular and especial Regard, the moral Actions of Men : This, as it is far more expressly, clearly, and constantly taught in Scripture, than in any of the Writings of the Philosophers, so it is also highly agreeable to right and true Reason. For that an *Omnipresent* and infinite-ly

ly Wise Being cannot but know every Thing that is done in every Part of the Universe, and with equal Ease take Notice of the minutest Things as of the greatest; that an infinitely *powerful* Being must needs govern and direct every Thing in such Manner, and to such Ends, as he knows to be best and fittest in the Whole, so far as is consistent with that Liberty of Will, which he has made Essential to all rational Creatures; and that an infinitely *Just and Good* Governor cannot but take more particular and exact Notice of the moral Actions of all his rational Creatures, and how far they are conformable or not conformable to the Rules he has set them; all this (I say) is most evidently agreeable to right Reason, and, as has been before shewn, deducible from it.

6. *That* God, after the Formation of the Earth, Of Para-
created Man at first *upright and innocent*, and placed *dise, and*
him in a *happy and paradisaical* State, where he in- *the Loss of*
joyed Plenty and Abundance of all Things without *it by Sin.*
Labour or Sorrow; and that *Sin* was the original *Gen. iii.*
Cause, that now on the contrary the very Ground is *17, 18, &*
curst and barren *for our Sake, and in Sorrow we eat* *19.*
of it all the Days of our Life; that Thorns also and
Thistles are brought forth to us, and in the Sweat of
our Face we eat Bread, till we return unto the Ground;
this likewise is very reasonable and credible in itself,
as appears, not only from the abstract Consideration
of the Nature of the Thing, but also from the ge-
neral Opinion that the ancient learnedest Heathens
entertained, upon very obscure and uncertain Tra-
dition, that the original State of Man was inno-
cent and simple, and the Earth,
whereon they dwelt, * *fruitful*
of itself, and abundant with all
Plenty; but that God, for the
Sin of Man, changed this Happy
Constitution of Things, and made

* Τὸ παλαιὸν πάντα ἦν ἀλφί-
των καὶ αλευρων πλήρη, καθά-
περ καὶ νῦν κόνεως καὶ κρηναί
δ' ἔρρεον, αἱ μὲν ὕδατος, γα-
λακῆς δ' ἄλλαι καὶ ὁμοίως
αἱ μὲν μέλιτος, αἱ δ' οἴνου, τι-

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ο ἰλαίου· ὑπὸ πλησμονῆς δ' αὐτῶν ἀνθρώπων καὶ τρυφῆς, εἰς ὕβριν ἐξέπεσον. Ζεὺς δὲ μισήσας τὴν καλῶς αἰσιν, ἠφάνισε πάντα, καὶ διὰ πόνου τὸν εἶον ἀπέδειξε. Calanus Indus apud Strabon. Lib. 15.

Labour necessary for the Support of our Lives.

Of the Flood.

7. That in Process of Time, after the first Entrance of Sin into the World, Men by Degrees corrupted themselves more and more, till at length

* Ἐπεὶ δὲ ἡ τῷ Θεοῦ μὲν μοῖρα ἐξήτηλη, ἐγένετο ἐν αὐτοῖς, πολλῶ τῷ θνήσκῃ καὶ πολλαῖς ἀνακεραυνυμένη, τὸ δὲ ἀνθρώπινον ἦθος ἐπεκράτει, τότε Θεὸς ὁ Θεῶν Ζεὺς, ἅτε δυνάμενος καθορᾶν τὰ τοιαῦτα, ἐννοήσας γένος ἐπιεικὲς ἀδελφῶς διαλιδέμενον, δίκην αὐτοῖς ἰπιδεῖναι βεληθεῖς, &c. Plato in Critia five Atlantico.

God, for the * Punishment of their Sin and Incurribleness, brought upon them a *general Flood*, which destroyed them all, except a few Persons, preserved for the Restoration of human Race, is a Truth delivered down to us, not only by Authority of Scripture, but also by the concurrent Testimony of almost all Heathen Philosophers and Poets : And the

Histories of all Nations backwards terminate in it : And, (which is the most remarkable Thing of all, because it is a demonstrative and ocular Proof of the *Universality* of *some such* Kind of Dissolution) the present visible Frame and Constitution of the Earth throughout ; the Disposition and Situation of the several Strata of different Kinds of Matter, whereof it is composed ; the numberless Shells of Fishes, Bones of other Animals, and Parts of all Kinds of Plants, which in every Country, and in almost every Place, are, at great Variety of Depths, found inclosed in Earth, in Clay, in Stones, and in all Sorts of Matter ; are such *apparent* Demonstrations of the Earth's having been in *Some Former* Times (the *whole Surface* of it at least) in a State of Fluidity, that whosoever has seen the Collections of this Kind made by the very ingenious Dr. Woodward, and others, must, in a Manner, abandon all Use

Use both of his Senses and Reason, if he can in the least Doubt of this Truth.

8. *That* God, after the Flood, made particular *Of Gods* Revelations of himself and of his Will to the *Pa-* revealing *triarchs*, is a Thing very credible in itself, for the *himself to* same Reasons that I have before shewn in general, *the Patri-* that the Expectation of some Revelation from God *archs, and* was a reasonable and probable Expectation, *giving the* And *Law to* that, after this, God should vouchsafe by Express *the Jews.* Revelation to give a *Law* to the whole Nation of the *Jews*, consisting very much in Sacrifices, and in external Rites and ceremonious Observances, cannot with any just Reason be rejected as an incredible Fact, if we consider, *that* such a Kind of Institution was necessary, in those Times and Circumstances, to preserve that Nation from the Idolatry and Worship of false Gods, wherewith the Countries around them were overspread; *that* those Rites and Ceremonies were typical of, and preparative to, a higher and more excellent Dispensation; *that* the Jews were continually told by their Prophets, that their Observance of those Rites and Ceremonies was by no Means so highly acceptable to God, nor so absolutely and indispensably insisted upon by him, as Obedience to the Moral Law; and *that* the whole Matter of Fact, relating to that Revelation, is delivered down to us in a History, on which the Polity of a whole Nation was founded, at a Time when no Body could be ignorant of the Truth of the principal Facts, and concerning which we can now have no more Reason to doubt, than of any History of any ancient Matter of Fact in the World. The most considerable and real Difficulty, *viz.* why this Favour was granted to that *single* Nation only, and not to all the rest of the World likewise, is to be accounted for by the same Reasons, which prove (as has been before shewn) that God *Page 163.* was not obliged to make known the *Revelation of the Gospel* to all Men alike,

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9. That all the other Particulars of *Scripture-History*, contained in the *Old Testament*, are true Relations of Matter of Fact, (not to insist now on the many Arguments which prove in general the Antiquity, Genuineness, and Authority of the Books themselves) will to a rational Inquirer appear very credible from hence, that very many of the particular Histories, and some even of the minuter Circumstances also of those Histories, are confirmed by concurrent Testimonies of profane and unquestionably unprejudiced Authors. Of which

* *Lib. 1. c. 16. and lib. 3. c. 16.* where see the Citations at large. *Grotius*, in his excellent Book of * the *Truth of the Christian Religion*, has given us a large Collection. As particularly, that the *Manner of the Formation of the Earth* out of a *Chaos* is mentioned by the ancientest *Phœnician, Egyptian, Indian, and Greek* Historians; the very Names of *Adam* and *Eve*, by *Sanctuniathon* and others; the *Longævity* of the *Antediluvians*, by *Berosus*, and *Manethos*, and others; the *Ark of Noah*, by *Berosus*; many Particulars of the *Flood*, by *Ovid* and others; the *Family of Noah*, and two of every Kind of Animals entering into the *Ark* with him, mentioned by *Lucian* himself, as a Tradition of the Ancient *Græcians*; the *Dove* which *Noah* sent out of the *Ark*, by *Abydenus*

† Δευκαλίωνι φασι περιγεραὺν ἐκ τῆς λαίρνακος ἀφιεμένην δὴλωμα γενέσθαι. χειμῶνος μὲν εἰσὼ παλιν ἐνδυομένην, εὐδίας δ' ἀποπλάσαν. *Plutarch: utrum Terrestria an Aquatica animantia plus habeant solertiæ.*

‡ Οἱ δὲ [Μωσῆν] διαδεξάμενοι, χρόνος μὲν τινὰς ἐν τοῖς αὐτοῖς διέμεινον δικαιοπραγοῦντες, καὶ θεοσεβεῖς ὡς ἀληθῶς ὄντες. *Επειτ' &c. lib. 16.*

and † *Plutarch*; the Building of *Babel*, by *Abydenus*; the Burning of *Sodom*, by *Diodorus Siculus*, and *Strabo*, and *Tacitus*, and others; several Particulars of the History of *Abraham* and the rest of the Patriarchs, by *Berosus* and others; many Particulars of *Moses's* Life, by several ancient Writers; the eminent *Piety* of the most ancient Jews, by ‡ *Strabo* and *Justin*; divers Actions of *David* and *Solomon*, in the *Phœnician Annals*; some

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some of the Actions of *Elijah*, by *Menander*, and confessed by *Julian* himself; the History of *Jonah*, under the Name of *Hercules*, by *Lycophron* and *Eneas Gazæus*; and the Histories of the following Times, by many more Authors. Besides that (as * learned Men have upon exceeding probable Grounds supposed) many of the most ancient Scripture-Histories are acknowledged and asserted in the Writings of the Poets, both Greeks and Latins; the true Histories being couched under *fictional* Names and *fabulous* Representations.

* See *Stillingfleet's Origin. sacræ, lib. 3. cap. 5. And Bocharti Phaleg, & Vossius de Idololatria.*

10. *That* God, in the Fulness of Time, that is, *Of God's* at that Time which his infinite Wisdom had fore-*sending his* appointed, which all the Ancient Prophecies had *Son into* determined, and which many concurrent Circum-*the World* stances in the State of the Jewish Religion, and in *for the Re-* the Disposition of the Roman Empire, had made a *demption* fit Season for the Reception and Propagation of a *of Man-* new Institution of Religion; *that* God (I say) at *kind.* That Time, should *send his Only-begotten Son*, That *Word or Wisdom* of the Father, That Divine Person *by whom* (as has been before shewn) he created the World, and by whom he made all former particular Manifestations of himself unto Men; *that* he should send him *to* take upon him our human Nature, and therein to make a full and particular Revelation of the Will of God to Mankind, (who by Sin had corrupted themselves, and forfeited the Favour of God, so that by the bare Light of Nature they could not discover any certain Means by which they could be satisfactorily and absolutely secure of regaining that Favour;) *To* preach unto Men Repentance and Remission of Sin, and, by giving himself a Sacrifice and Expiation for Sin, to declare the Acceptableness of Repentance, and the Certainty of Pardon thereupon, in a Method evidently consistent with all necessary Vindication of the Honour and Authority of the Divine Laws, and with God's irreconcilable

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irreconcilable Hatred against Sin; To be a Mediator and Intercessor between God and Man; to procure the particular Assistance of God's Holy Spirit, which might be in Men a new and effectual Principle of a Heavenly and Divine Life; in short, Word, To be the Saviour and Judge of Mankind, and finally to bring them to Eternal Life: All this, when clearly and expressly revealed, and by good Testimony proved to be so revealed, is apparently agreeable and very credible to right and true Reason. As (because it is the main and fundamental Article of the Christian Faith) I shall endeavour to make out more largely and distinctly, by shewing in particular, that none of the several Objections upon which *Speculative* Unbelievers reject this Doctrine, do at all prove any Inconsistency, in the Belief of it, with sound and unprejudiced Reason.

That 'tis not unreasonable to suppose God making a Revelation of his Will to Men.

For, *First*, It cannot be thought unreasonable to be believed in the general, that God should make a *Revelation of his Will* to Mankind, since on the contrary (as has been before proved at large) it is very agreeable to the Moral Attributes of God, and to the Notions and Expectations of the wisest and most rational Men that lived in the Heathen World.

That 'tis not unreasonable to believe, that God would appoint a Sacrifice or Expiation for Sin.

Secondly, It cannot be thought unreasonable to be believed, that in such a Revelation, wherein God freely proclaims Remission of Sin, and the Acceptableness of Repentance, he should nevertheless have appointed such a *Sacrifice or Expiation for Sin*, as might at the same Time be a sufficient Testimony of his irreconcilable Hatred against it. For tho', by the Light of Nature, it was indeed exceeding probable and to be hoped for, that God would forgive Sin upon true Repentance, yet it could not be proved, that he was absolutely obliged to do so, or that he *would* certainly do so. On the contrary, there was Reason to suppose, that, in Vindication of the Honour and Dignity of his Laws, he would require

require some further Satisfaction and Expiation. And accordingly we find the Custom of *Sacrificing* to have prevailed universally over the Heathen World in all Ages: Which, how unreasonable soever an Expectation it was to think that the Blood of Beasts could truly expiate Sin, yet thus much it plainly and undeniably shews, that it has been the common Apprehension of Mankind in all Ages, that God would not be appeased nor pardon Sin without some Punishment and Satisfaction; and yet at the same Time they had good Hopes, that, upon the Repentance of Sinners, God would accept some other Satisfaction instead of the Destruction of the Offenders. 'Tis therefore plainly agreeable to right Reason to believe that God, in Vindication of the Honour of his Laws, and for a Testimony of his Hatred against Sin, should appoint some Sacrifice or Expiation for Sin, at the same Time that he forgives the Sinner upon his true Repentance.

Thirdly, It cannot be thought unreasonable to be believed, that a *Mediator* or *Intercessor* should be appointed between God and Man, through and by whom the Prayers of *Sinners* may be offered up so as to be acceptable in the Sight of God. 'Tis well known, the Generality of the wisest Heathens thought it agreeable to Reason to make Use of Subordinate Intelligences, Dæmons or Heroes, by whom they put up their Prayers to the Superior Gods, hoping that, by the Mediation of those Intercessors, the Unworthiness of their own Persons, and the Defects of these Prayers might be supplied, and they might obtain such merciful and gracious Answers to their Prayers, as they could not presume to hope for upon their own Account. Wherein though those Pagans laboured indeed under very great Uncertainty, in doing a Thing for which they had no sufficient Warrant, and in using Mediators whom they neither knew distinctly to have any Being,

That it is not unreasonable to believe, that a Mediator should be appointed between God and Man.

Being, nor could they however have any good Security that such Mediation would be acceptable to the Supreme God; yet, at the same Time, this undeniably proves, that 'tis by no Means inconsistent with right Reason to believe that a Mediator may by Divine Authority be appointed between God and sinful Men, to be their Intercessor and Advocate with a justly offended God.

Of the
Objection
drawn
from the
Dignity of
the Person
whom we
believe to
be our Me-
diator and
Redeemer.

Fourthly, The greatest real Difficulty in this Matter, to the Judgment of right Reason, seems to arise from the Consideration of the *Dignity of the Person*, whom we believe to have given himself a Sacrifice and Propitiation for the Sins of Mankind, viz. how 'tis possible, that the *Only-begotten Son of God* should be *Incarnate* and become *Man*; how 'tis conceivable that *God* should *condescend* so far as to *send*, and the *Son of God* condescend willingly to *be sent*, and do such great Things for his Creatures; and, above all, how 'tis consistent with Reason to suppose God condescending to do so much for such *frail* and *weak* Creatures as *Men*, who, in all Appearance, seem to be but a very small, low, and inconsiderable Part of the Creation. And here indeed it must readily be acknowledged, that human Reason could never have discovered such a Method as this for the Reconciliation of Sinners to an offended God, without express Revelation. But then neither on the other Side, when once this Method is made known, is there any such Difficulty or Inconceivableness in it, as can reasonably make a wise and considerate Man call in Question the Truth of a well-attested Revelation, merely upon that Account. Which, indeed, any plain Absurdity or Contradiction in the Matter of a Doctrine pretended to be revealed would, it must be confessed, unavoidably do. For, as to the *Possibility of the Incarnation of the Son of God*, whatever Mysteriousness there confessedly was in the *Manner* of it, yet, as to the Thing itself, there

there is evidently no more Unreasonableness in believing the Possibility of it, than in believing the Union of the Soul and Body, or any other certain Truth which we plainly see implies no Contradiction in the Thing itself, at the same Time that we are sensible we cannot discover the *Manner* how it is effected. Again, As to the Incredibility of the *Doctrine*, that God should make so great a *Condescension* to his Creatures; and that a Person of such Dignity as the Only-begotten *Son* of God should vouchsafe to give himself a Sacrifice for the Sins of Men: He that duly considers, how 'tis no Diminution to the Glory and Greatness of the Creator of all Things to inspect, govern, and direct every Thing by his All-wise Providence through the whole Creation; to take Care even of the Meanest of his Creatures, so that not a *Sparrow falls to the Ground*, or a *Hair of our Head perishes* without his Knowledge; and to observe exactly every Particle even of inanimate Matter in the Universe: He (I say) who duly considers This, cannot with Reason think it any real Disparagement to the *Son* of God, (though it was indeed a most wonderful and amazing Instance of Humility and Condescension) that he should concern himself so far for sinful Men, as to appear in their Nature to reveal the Will of God more clearly to them, to give himself a Sacrifice and Expiation for their Sins, and to bring them to Repentance and Eternal Life. The greatest Enemies and Deriders of Christianity have asserted Things far more incredible to have been done upon far less Occasions: Witness what *Julian* the Apostate * thought fit to believe concerning *Æsculapius's* coming down from Heaven, and conversing upon Earth in a visible Form, only to teach Men the Art of healing Diseases. And Modern

* Ο γὰρ Ζεὺς ἐξ ἑαυτοῦ τὸν Ἀσκληπίον ἐγέννησεν· εἰς δὲ τὴν γῆν διὰ τῆς ἡλίας γονίμῃ ζωῆς ἐνεφάνη· οὗτος ἐπὶ γῆς ἐξ οὐρανοῦ ποιησάμενος πόρον, ἐνοειδῶς μὲν περὶ τὴν Ἐπίδαυρον ἐφάνη.
Julian.

Unbelievers,

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Believers, who seem willing in the contrary Extremity, to deny God's having *any* Regard, or taking *a* Care in any Respect, for the Welfare and Happiness of his Creatures, are forced, if they will attempt to give any Account or Explication of Things, to invent much more incredible Hypotheses, dishonourable to God, and utterly inconsistent with his Divine Attributes. Indeed, if we consider Things impartially, so far is it from being truly any Diminution of the Greatness and Glory of God to send his *Son* into the World for the Redemption and Salvation of Mankind, that, on the contrary, it is a Means of bringing the very greatest Honour to the Laws and Government of God, that can be imagined. For What can be imagined more Honourable, and worthy of the Supreme Lord and Governor of all Things, than to shew forth his Mercy and Goodness, in forgiving the Sins of frail and fallible Creatures, and suffering himself to be reconciled to them upon their true Repentance, and yet at the same Time to cause such an Expiation to be made for Sin, by the Sufferings and Death of his own Son in their Nature, as might be an abundant Evidence of his irreconcilable Hatred against Sin, a just Vindication of the Authority and Dignity of his Laws, and a sufficient and effectual Warning to deter Men from Sin, to create in them the greatest Dread and Detestation of it, and for ever to terrify them from venturing upon wilful Transgression and Disobedience? 'Tis true, no Man can take upon him certainly to say, but God by his absolute Sovereignty and Authority might, if he had so pleased, have pardoned Sin upon Repentance, without any Sacrifice or Expiation at all. But This Method of doing it by the Death of Christ is more wise and fit, and evidently more proper and effectual to discountenance and prevent Presumption, to discourage Men from repeating their Transgressions,

Transgressions, to give them a deep Sense of the heinous Nature of Sin, and to convince them of the Excellency and Importance of the Laws of God, and the indispensable Necessity of paying Obedience to them; forasmuch as it shews us, that at the same Time that God was willing to save the Sinner, yet, lest Encouragement should be given to Sin by letting it go unpunished, he did not think fit to forgive the Transgressions of Men without great Sufferings in our Nature, and to do away the Guilt of our Sins but upon such difficult Terms as the Death of his own Son. So that in this Dispensation, Justice and *Mercy and Truth are met together, Righteousness and Peace have kissed each other.* And by how much the greater the Dignity of the Person was, who gave himself thus a Sacrifice for the Sins of Men, of so much the greater Weight and Force is this Argument to deter Men for the future from Sin, and to convince them of the Necessity of Obedience. Wherefore so far is it from being true, that the Consideration of the Dignity of the Person suffering is a real Objection against the Credibility of the Doctrine, that on the contrary, That very Consideration contains the highest Vindication imaginable of the Greatness, and Honour, and Authority of the Laws of God, and at the same Time, the greatest possible Instance or Expression of his Mercy and Compassion towards Men, agreeable to our natural Notions of his Divine Attributes. And then, as to the *last* Part of this Difficulty, *viz.* how it can be consistent with Reason to suppose God condescending to do so very great Things for such *mean and weak* Creatures as *Men* are, who in all Appearance, seem to be but a very *small, low, and inconsiderable* Part of the Creation; forasmuch as the whole Earth itself is but a little Spot that bears no Proportion at all to the Universe; and, in all Probability of Reason, the large and num-
Z berless

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berless Orbs of Heaven cannot but be supposed to be filled with Beings more capable, than we, to shew forth the Praise and Glory of their Almighty Creator, and more worthy to be the Objects of his Care and Love: To this Part of the Difficulty, I say, the Answer is very easy, *That* the Mercy and Love of the infinitely good God, is extended equally over all his Works; *That*, let the Universe be supposed as large, and the rational Creatures, with which it is furnished, as many and excellent, as any one can imagine, yet Mankind is plainly the Chief, indeed the only Inhabitant, for whose Sake 'tis evident this our Globe of Earth was formed into a habitable World; and this our Earth is, as far as we have any Means of judging, as considerable and worthy of the Divine Care, as most other Parts of the System; and this our System as considerable, as any other single System in the Universe; and finally, *that*, in like Manner as the same Divine *Providence*, which presides over the whole Creation, does particularly govern and direct every Thing in this our lower World, as well as in every other particular Part of the Universe; so there is no real Difficulty to right Reason, in conceiving that the same Divine *Logos*, the *Word* or *Messenger* of the Father, who in various Dispensations, according to the particular Needs and Exigencies of Mankind, has made various Manifestations of God, and Discoveries of the Divine Will, to Us here upon Earth, may also, for aught we know, have to other Beings, in other Parts of the Universe, according to their several Capacities or Wants, made different Manifestations of God and Discoveries of his Will, in Ways of which we can know nothing, and, in which we have no Concern: There being nothing in this at all contrary to the Nature of God, or the Condition of Things.

Fifthly

and Revealed RELIGION.

Fifthly and lastly, If any one thinks it unreasonable to be believed, that God should send his Son into the World for the Redemption of Mankind, and yet that this Appearance of the Son of God upon Earth should not be till the *latter Ages* of the World; and after he has appeared, yet his Appearance not be made known equally to *all Nations*: Such a one * must likewise for the same Reason affirm, that 'tis unreasonable to believe the Necessity and Obligations even of Natural Religion itself, because 'tis plain all Men are not furnished equally with the same Capacities and Opportunities of understanding those Obligations; And consequently no Deist can, consistently with his own Principles, make *This* Objection against the Truth of Christianity. He must likewise for the same Reason affirm, that God is obliged in all other Respects also to make all his Creatures equal; to make Men, Angels; to endue All Men with the same Faculties and Capacities, as Any; at least, to make all Men capable of the very same *Kind* and the same *Degree* of Happiness, and to afford to All of them all the very same Means or Opportunities of obtaining it: In a Word, he must assert, that infinite Wisdom cannot reasonably be supposed to have a Right of making Variety of Creatures in very various Circumstances: Which is an Assertion palpably most absurd, in Experience false, and a very unjust Diminution of God's Sovereignty in the World. But besides, Though the Redemption purchased by the Son of God is not indeed actually made known unto All Men, yet, as no Man ever denied, but that the Benefit of the Death of Christ extended backwards to those who lived *before* his Appearance in the World, so no Man can prove, but that the same Benefit may likewise extend itself forwards to those who never heard of his Appearance, though they lived *after* it.

Of
Objection
drawn
from the
Christian
Revelation
not being
in Fact
Universal.

* See
above,
Page 165.

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Of the
other Par-
ticulars of
Scripture-
history con-
tained in
the New
Testament.

II. That the History of the Life of Christ, contained in the New Testament, is a true Relation of Matters of Fact, (not to insist here on the Testimony of his Disciples and Followers, which shall be considered hereafter in its proper Place) will to a rational Inquirer appear very credible from hence, that very many Particulars of that History are confirmed by concurrent Testimonies of profane and unquestionably unprejudiced Authors. That before the Coming of our Saviour, there was a general Expectation spread over all the Eastern Nations, that out of *Judæa* should arise a Person who should be Governor of the World, is expressly affirmed

* Percrebuerat Oriente toto
vetus & constans opinio, esse
in fatis, ut *Judæa* profecti re-
rum potirentur. *Sueton.*

† Pluribus persuasio in-
erat, antiquis Sacerdotum li-
bris contineri, eo ipso tem-
pore fore, ut valeſceret O-
riens, profectique *Judæa* re-
rum potirentur. *Tacit. lib.*
21.

‡ See the Place cited by
Grotius, de Veritate Christi-
anæ Religionis, *lib. 3. cap.*
14.

|| Cum audisset [*Augustus*,]
inter pueros quos in Syria
Herodes Rex *Judæorum* intra
bimatum jussit interfici, filium
quoque ejus occisum; ait,
Melius est Herodis porcum esse
quam filium. *Macrobius. lib. 2.*
cap. 4. [A Testimony so very
remarkable and pertinent, that 'tis strange how *Grotius* could omit to
mention it in the Place now cited.]

by the Roman Historians, * *Suetonius* and † *Tacitus*. That there lived in *Judæa*, at the Time which the Gospel relates, such a Person as *Jesus of Nazareth*, is acknowledged by all Authors, both Jewish and Pagan, who have written since that Time. The *Star* that appeared at his Birth, and the Journey of the *Chaldean* Wise Men, is mentioned by ‡ *Chalcidius* the Platonist. *Herod's* causing all the Children in *Bethleem* under two Years old to be Slain, and a Reflexion made upon him on that Occasion by the Emperor *Augustus*, is related by || *Macrobius*. Many of the *Miracles* that *Jesus* worked in his Life-time, are, as to Matters of Fact, (particularly his healing the Lame and the Blind, and casting out Devils)

expressly

III	III	
III	III	
III	III	I
III	III	I
III	III	I

expressly owned by the most implacable Enemies of Christianity, by * *Celsus* and *Julian*, and the Authors of the *Jewish Talmud*. And how the Power of the Heathen Gods ceased, after the Coming of Christ, is acknowledged by † *Porphry*, who attributes it to their being Angry at the Setting up of the Christian Religion, which he styles impious and profane. Many Particulars of the collateral History, concerning *John Baptist*, and *Herod* and *Pilate*, (not to mention the famous Testimony concerning *Jesus* himself, because it is by Some suspected not to be genuine, notwithstanding it is found in all the ancient Copies) are largely recorded by *Josephus*. The Crucifixion of Christ under *Pontius Pilate* is related by ‡ *Tacitus*: And diverse of the most remarkable Circumstances attending it, such as the *Earthquake* and miraculous *Darkness*, were recorded in the || public Roman Registers, commonly appealed to by the first Christian Writers as what could not be denied by the Adversaries themselves; and are in a very particular Manner attested by § *Phlegon*. Then, as to the Resurrection and Ascension of Christ, these depend on the general Proofs of the Credibility of his *Disciples* Testimony, and other following *Evidences*; which will be considered hereafter in their proper Place.

* See the Places
Grotius, de Veritate Christi,
lib. 2. cap. 5.

† *Ibid.*

‡ *Tiberio imperitante, per procuratorem Pontium Pilatum, supplicio affectus erat.*
lib. 15.

|| Eum mundi casum relat-
tum in Arcanis vestris habetis.
Tertullian. Apol.

§ Περὶ δὲ τῆς ἐπὶ Τιβερίῳ
Καίσαρι ἐκλείψεως, ἢ βασιλευ-
οντι καὶ ὁ Ἰησοῦς εἶπεν ἐσαυ-
ρῶσθαι καὶ περὶ τῶν μεγάλων
τότε γενομένων σεισμῶν τῆς γῆς,
ἀνέγραψε καὶ Φλέγων. *Origen.*
advers. Cels. lib. 2.

Τελείω δ' εἶπει τῆς διακοσι-
οσῆς δευτέρας Ὀλυμπιάδος ἐγέ-
νετο ἐκλείψις ἡλίου, μεγίστη τῶν
ἐγνωρισμένων πρότερον καὶ νύξ ὥρα
ἔκλει τῆς ἡμέρας ἐγένετο, ὥστε καὶ
ἀστέραι ἐν ἑρανῷ φανῆναι καὶ
σεισμός, &c. *Phlegon.*

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Of the Day
of Judg-
ment, and
Christ the
Judge.

12. *That* God has appointed a *Day*, wherein he will judge the *World in Righteousness*, by *That Person* whom he has ordained, in order to reward every Man according to his Works, is a Doctrine perfectly agreeable to right Reason, and to our natural Notions of the Attributes of God; As may appear more particularly from what has been before said concerning the Necessity and Certainty of another Life after this, and is evident from the Opinion of all the wiser Heathens concerning this Matter. Nor may it perhaps be altogether impertinent to observe here, that the Poets, both Greek and Latin, have unanimously agreed in this one particular Circumstance, that Men after Death should not have Judgment passed upon them immediately by God himself, but by *just Men* appointed for that Purpose.

Of the
Resurrec-
tion of the
Body,

13. *That*, in order to this final Judgment, not only the Soul shall survive the Dissolution of the Body, but the *Body itself* also shall be *raised again*; This Doctrine, though not indeed discoverable with any Kind of Certainty by the bare Light of Nature, because the Belief of the Soul's Immortality (for aught that appears to Reason alone) is sufficient to answer all the Purposes of a Future State, as far as is discoverable merely by the Light of Nature; yet this Doctrine (I say) of *The Resurrection of the Body*, when made known by Revelation, evidently contains nothing in it in the least contrary to right Reason. For what reasonable Man can deny, but that 'tis plainly altogether as easy for God to raise the Body again after Death, as to create and form

* Ἀλλ' ὡς εἶδεν ἀδύνατον καὶ ἡμᾶς μετὰ τὸ τελευτῆσαι πάλιν περιόδῳ τῶν εἰδυμένων χρόνῳ, εἰς ὃ νῦν ἐσμεν ἀποκαταστήσασθαι σχῆμα. Chrysippus citat. a Laurent. lib. 7.

it at first? Some of the * Stoical Philosophers seem to have thought it not only possible, but even probable: And many of the Jews, who had no express Revelation concerning it, did yet believe it upon

upon an ancient Tradition, as appears from all their Writings, and particularly from the Translation of the last Verse of the Book of *Job*, which according to *the Seventy* runs thus : *So Job died, being old and full of Days ; but * 'tis written that he shall rise again with those whom the Lord raises up.*

* Γέγραπται δὲ αὐτὸν πάλιν ἀναστήσεσθαι, μετ' ὧν ὁ Κύριος ἀνίστησι. *Job. xlii. ult.*

The only real Difficulty in this Doctrine seems to arise upon putting the Supposition of one Body's being turned into the Nourishment, and becoming Part of the Substance of another, so as that the same Parts may equally belong to two Bodies, to both of which it shall nevertheless be absolutely impossible that the same Parts should be restored. But this Objection, as great and principal a Difficulty as it is, is really but a great *Trifle*. For there does not at all appear any absolute Necessity, that, to constitute the same Body, there must be an exact Restitution of all and only the same Parts. And if there was any such Necessity, yet even still, without making that hard Supposition (which † *Grotius* and others have done) that God by a miraculous Providence always interposes to prevent the Parts of one human Body from incorporating with and becoming the Nourishment of another, (for I cannot see any sufficient Ground to deny, but that it may be possible in Nature, for barbarous *Cannibals*, if any such there be, to subsist for some Time, and live wholly one upon another, if deprived of all other Sustenance ;) Without any such hard Suppositions as these (I say) 'tis easy to imagine many Ways, by which the Resurrection of the same Body, properly speaking, shall nevertheless be very possible, and the whole Foundation of this, and all other Difficulties of this Kind, concerning the Parts, and Forms, and Magnitudes, and Proportions, of our future Bodies, be intirely taken away.

† De Veritate Rel. Chr. lib. 2. cap. 10.

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Re-
on
of the same
Body.

As, *First*, No Man can say 'tis improbable (and they who have been most and best versed in Microscopical Observations, think it more than probable) that the *original Stamina*, which contain all and every one of the solid Parts and Vessels of the Body, not excepting even the minutest Nerves and Fibres, are themselves the *intire Body*, and that all the *extraneous Matter*, which, coming in by Way of Nourishment, fills up and extends the minute and insensible Vessels, of which all the visible and sensible Vessels are composed, is not strictly and properly *Part* of the Body. Consequently, while all this *extraneous Matter*, which serves only to swell the Body to its just Magnitude, is in *continual Flux*, the *original Stamina* may continue *unchanged*, and so no Confusion of Bodies will be possible in Nature. There may be made many very considerable Observations concerning the *determinate Figure* into which every respective Body unfolds itself by Growth, concerning the Impossibility of the Body's extending itself, by any Nourishment whatsoever, beyond *that certain Magnitude*, to which the original Vessels are capable of being unfolded; and concerning the *Impossibility of restoring* by any Nourishment any the smallest Vessel or solid Part of the Body, that has at any Time happened to be mutilated by any Accident: All which Observations, often and carefully made, will seem very much to favour some such Speculation as This.

Secondly, It may also be supposed otherwise, not without good Probability, that *

* Ἡμεῖς μὲν εἶν, ἃ φαμέν τὸ διαφθαρέν σῶμα ἐπανέρχεσθαι εἰς τὴν ἐξ ἀρχῆς φύσιν ὡς εἶδὲ τὸν διαφθαρέντα κόκκον τῆς σίτης· λέγομεν γὰρ ὥσπερ ἐπὶ τῷ κόκκῳ τῆς σίτου ἐγείρεται σάκος, οὕτω λόγῳ τις ἐγκεῖται τῷ σῶματι, ἀφ' οὗ μὴ φθειρομένου ἐγείρεται τὸ σῶμα ἐν ἀφθαρσίᾳ. Origen. advers. Cels. lib. 5.

in like Manner as in every Grain of Corn there is contained a minute insensible seminal Principle, which is itself the intire future Blade and Ear, and, in due Season, when

Origen. advers.

all

all the rest of the Grain is corrupted, evolves and unfolds itself visibly into that Form; so our present mortal and corruptible Body may be but the *Exuviae*, as it were, of some hidden and at present insensible Principle, (possibly the present Seat of the *Soul*) which at the Resurrection shall discover itself in its proper Form. This Way also, there can be no Confusion of Bodies, possible in Nature. And 'tis not without some Weight, that the ancientest Writers of the Church have always made Use of this very Similitude; that the Apostle St. *Paul* himself alledges the same Comparison; and that the Jewish Writers seem to have had some obscure Glimpse of this Notion, when they talked of a certain *incorruptible* Part of the Body, though these latter indeed explained themselves very weakly and unphilosophically.

Many other Ways perhaps may be imagined, by which the same Thing may be explained intelligibly. But these Speculations are nice and subtile, and neither needful nor proper to be enlarged upon in this Place. Only the bare Mention of them, shews the manifold *Possibility* of the Doctrine of the Resurrection, against the Objections of those who would have it seem *contradictory*.

14. Lastly, *That* after the Resurrection and the general Judgment, wherein every Man shall be judged according to his Works; they that have done well, shall go into *everlasting Happiness*; and they that have done Evil, into *everlasting Punishment*; is a Doctrine in itself very credible, and reasonable to be believed. Concerning the *everlasting Happiness* of the Righteous, there is no Dispute; it being evident that God in his infinite Bounty may Reward the sincere Obedience of his Creatures, as much beyond the Merit of their own weak and imperfect Works, as he himself pleases. *But the everlasting Punishment*, threatened to the Wicked, has seemed to

Of the
eternal
Happiness
of the
Blessed,
and the
eternal
Punish-
ment of the
Damned.

Many

The EVIDENCE of Natural

Many a great Difficulty ; since 'tis certain from our natural Notions of the Attributes of God, that no Man shall be punished beyond the just Demerit of his Sins. Here therefore it is to be observed, *first*, that no Man can say 'tis unreasonable, that they who by wilful and stubborn Disobedience to their Almighty Creator and most merciful Benefactor, and, by the habitual Practice of unrepented Wickedness, have, during the State of Trial, made themselves unfit for the Enjoyment of that Happiness which God has prepared for them that love and obey him, should be *eternally rejected*, and *excluded* from it. Thus much the wickedest of Men are willing enough to believe : And if bare *Deprivation of Happiness* was all the Punishment they had Reason to fear, they would be well content to sit still in their Wickedness. But is it at all agreeable to Reason to believe, that the Punishment, to be inflicted by the final Wrath of a provoked God upon his most obstinate and incorrigible Enemies, should be merely such a Thing as is in its own Nature less dreadful and terrible, than even those Afflictions which by certain Experience we see in this present Life fall sometimes upon such Persons with whom God is not angry at all ? Is it agreeable to Reason to believe, that God, who (as is evident by Experience) suffers the very best of his own Servants, for the Punishment of their Sins, or even only for the Trial of their Virtue, to fall sometimes under all the Calamities and Miseries, which 'tis possible for the cruellest and most powerful Tyrants to invent and execute, should punish his most obstinately rebellious and finally impenitent Creatures, with nothing more than the *Negation of Happiness* ? There must therefore in the *next* Place be some *sensible and positive Punishment*, besides the mere negative Loss of Happiness. And whoever seriously considers the dreadful Effects of God's Anger in this present World,

in

and Revealed RELIGION.

in the Instance of the general *Deluge*, the Overthrow of *Sodom and Gomorrha*, the amazing Calamities which befell the whole *Jewish Nation* at the Destruction of *Jerusalem*, and other such-like Examples ; in some of which Cases, the Judgments have fallen upon mixed Multitudes of good Men and bad together ; (not to mention the Calamities which sometimes befall even good Men by themselves :) Whosoever, I say, seriously considers all this, cannot but frame to himself very terrible Apprehensions of the *Greatness* of that Punishment, which the despised Patience of God shall finally inflict on the impenitently Wicked and Incorrigible, when they shall be separated and be by themselves. And then, as to the *Duration* of this Punishment, no Man can presume in our present State of Ignorance and Darkness to be able truly to judge, barely by the Strength of his own natural Reason, what *in this Respect* is or is not consistent with the Wisdom, and Justice, and Goodness, of the Supreme Governor of the World, since we neither know the *Place*, nor *Kind*, nor *Manner*, nor *Circumstances*, nor *Degrees*, nor *All the Ends and Uses* of the final Punishment of the Wicked : Only this one Thing we are certain of, that the Justice of God will abundantly vindicate itself, and all Mouths shall be stopped before him, and be forced to acknowledge the exact Righteousness of all his Judgments, and to condemn their own Folly and Wickedness ; forasmuch as the *Degrees* or *Intenseness* of the Punishment which shall be inflicted on the Impenitent, shall be exactly proportionate to their Sins, as a Recompence of their Demerit, so that no Man shall suffer more than he has deserved. This being once clearly established, the Difficulty about the *Duration* of the Punishment will not appear so insuperable to right Reason. For nothing can be more evident, than that God may justly banish the Wicked *eternally* from his Kingdom

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Rev. xiv.
10. Shall
be torment-
ed with
Fire and
Brimstone,
in the Pre-
sence of the
Holy An-
gels, and
in the Pre-
sence of the
Lamb.

dom of Glory, and from that Happiness which is his free and undeserved Gift to the Righteous : And the *positive* Punishment which shall be inflicted upon them in that State of Eternal Rejection, shall undoubtedly be such, and so proportionated to Mens Deserts, as the Righteous Judge will then make appear, before Men and Angels, to be just, and wise, and necessary, and such only as becomes the infinitely Wise and Good Lord and Governor of the Universe to inflict. The Wisest of the Hea-then Philosophers, without the Help of Revelation, have taught, and did believe it agreeable to right

* Οἱ δὲ ἂν δόξωσιν ἀνιάτως ἔχειν διὰ τὰ μεγάλα τῶν ἁμαρτημάτων, τέττις ἢ προσήκουσα μοῖρα ῥίπτει εἰς τὸν Τάρταρον, ὃθεν ἔπολε ἐκβαίνουσι. *Plato in Phæd.*

Ὡσπερ σὺ κολάσεις αἰωνίως νομίζεις, ἔγω καὶ οἱ τῶν ἱερῶν ἐκείνων ἐξηγηταί, τεληταί τε καὶ μυσαργοί. *Cels. apud Origen. lib. 8.*

Οἱ δὲ ἄδικοι πάνταν αἰωνίοις κακοῖς συνέζονται. *Id. ibid.*

Reason, that * the Punishment of the Incurrible should be [*αἰώνιος*] *without* any determinate or known *End*. And *We* cannot tell how many wise Designs God may serve thereby. We know not but that, as God has *now* discovered to *Us* in some Measure the Fall and Punishment of *evil Angels*, to be a Warning to *Us*; so he may *hereafter* use the Example of the Punishment of *Wicked and Incurri-*

ble Men, to be a Means of preserving *other Beings* in their Obedience. And many other Considerations there may possibly be, very necessary to enable us to judge rightly concerning this Matter; which, in this present State, we have no sufficient Means of coming to the Knowledge of.

Thus all the *Credenda*, or *Doctrines*, which the Christian Religion teaches, (that is, not only those *plain Doctrines* which it requires to be believed as fundamental, and of Necessity to eternal Salvation, but even *All* the Doctrines which it teaches as Matters of Truth) are in the *First Place*, though indeed many of them not discoverable by bare Reason un-
assisted

and Revealed RELIGION.

assisted with Revelation, yet, when discovered by Revelation, apparently most * agreeable to sound and unprejudiced Reason.

* Τα τῆς πίστεως ἡμῶν, κοινὰς ἐννοίας ἀρχήν δὲ συνάγου ἐξ ὧν α. Origen. advers. Cels. lib. 3.

In the next Place, Every one of these Doctrines has a natural Tendency, and a direct and powerful Influence, to reform Mens Lives, and correct their Manners. This is the Great End, and ultimate Design, of all true Religion; and 'tis a very great and fatal Mistake to think that any Doctrine, or any Belief whatsoever, can be any otherwise of any Benefit to Men, than as it is fitted to promote this main End. *There was none of the Doctrines of our Saviour, (as an † excellent Prelate of our Church admirably expresses this Matter) calculated for the Gratification of Mens idle Curiosities, the busying and amusing them with airy and useless Speculations; Much less were they intended for an Exercise of our Credulity, or a Trial how far we could bring our Reason to submit to our Faith: But, as on the one Hand they were plain and simple, and such as, by their Agreeableness to the rational Faculties of Mankind, did highly recommend themselves to our Belief; so on the other Hand they had an immediate Relation to Practice, and were the genuine Principles and Foundation upon which all human and divine Virtues were naturally to be super-structed.* Particularly, What can be a more necessary and excellent Foundation of true Religion, than That Doctrine which the Christian Religion clearly and distinctly teaches us concerning the Nature and Attributes of the *One only true God*, without any of that Ambiguity and Doubtfulness, those various and inconsistent Opinions and Conjectures, those uncertain and oft-times false Reasonings concerning the Nature of God, which, notwithstanding the natural Possibility of discovering very many of the Attributes of God by the Light of true Reason, did

Every one of them has a direct Tendency and powerful Influence to reform Mens Manners.

† Arch Bp. Sharp's Sermon before the Queen on Christmas Day 1704.

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did yet in Fact overspread the greatest Part of the Heathen World with Polytheism or Atheism? What can be so certain a Preservative against Idolatry, and the Worship of false Gods, as the Doctrine, that *the Universe, the Heavens and the Earth, and all Things contained therein, are the Creatures and Workmanship of the One true God, and have a continual Dependence upon Him for the Preservation of their Being?* What can be so sure a Ground of true Piety and Reliance upon God, as the clear Christian Doctrine concerning *Providence*, concerning God's perpetually governing and directing the Issues and Events of all Things, and inspecting with a more especial Regard the moral Actions of Men? which Doctrine was perplexed by the Philosophers with endless Disputes. What can be so just a Vindication of the Goodness of God, and consequently so necessary in order to our maintaining in our Minds worthy and honourable Notions concerning him, as the Doctrine, that *God created Man at first Upright, and that the Original of all Evil and Misery is Sin?* the Want of a clear Knowledge of which Truth extremely perplexed the Heathen World, and made Many recur to that most absurd Fiction of a Self-existent *Evil Principle*. What can be a more proper Motive to Piety, than the Doctrine that *the Deluge*, and other remarkable Calamities which have befallen Mankind, were sent upon them by God's immediate Direction, as *Punishments* for their Wickedness? What can be a greater Encouragement to the Practice of Holiness, than the Doctrine, that *God has at several Times vouchsafed to make several particular Revelations of his Will to Men*, to instruct and support them more effectually in that Practice? But above all, What Doctrine could ever have been imagined so admirably fitted in all Respects to promote all the Ends of true Religion, as that of the *Incar-*
nation

and Revealed RELIGION.

nation of the Son of God? Which Way could Men have been filled with so deep a Sense of the Mercy and Love of God towards them, and have been instructed in all divine Truths in a Method so well accommodated to their present Infirmities, as by *God's sending his Only-begotten Son, to take upon him our Nature, and therein to make a general Revelation of the Will of God to Mankind?* How could the Honour and Dignity, and Authority of the Laws of God have been so effectually vindicated, and at the same Time so satisfactory an Assurance of Pardon upon true Repentance have been given unto Men, as by this Method of *the Son of God giving himself a Sacrifice and Expiation for Sin?* What could have been a more glorious Manifestation of the Mercy and Compassion of God, and at the same Time a more powerful Means to discountenance Mens Presumption, to discourage them from repeating their Transgressions, to give them a deep Sense of the heinous Nature of Sin, and of God's extreme Hatred and utter Irreconcilableness to it, and to convince them of the Excellency and Importance of the Laws of God, and the indispensable Necessity of paying Obedience to them, than this Expedient of *saving Sinners by the Sufferings and Death of the Son of God, and by establishing with them a new and gracious Covenant upon the Merits of that Satisfaction?* How could Men be better encouraged to begin a religious Life, than by having such a *Mediator, Advocate, and Intercessor* for them with God, to obtain Pardon of all their Frailties, and by being assured of the *Assistance of the Spirit of God*, to enable them to conquer all their corrupt Affections, and to be in them an effectual Principle of a heavenly and divine Life? In fine, What stronger and more powerful Motives could possibly have been contrived to persuade Men to live virtuously, and to deter them from Vice, than the clear Discovery made to us in
the

The EVIDENCE of Natural

the Gospel of God's *having appointed a Day, wherein he will judge the World in Righteousness, every Man according to his Works ; and that they who have done well, shall be adjudged to everlasting Happiness ; and they that have done Evil, to endless Punishment ;* of which the Light of Nature afforded Men but obscure Glimpses ? And may we not here, upon the Whole, appeal now even to our Adversaries themselves, whether in all and every one of these Doctrines there be not a more powerful, a more effectual Method laid down, for the Reforming human Nature, and obliging the whole World to forsake their Sins, and to lead holy and virtuous Lives, than was ever taught before ; nay, or than was possible to have been contrived by all the Wit of Mankind ? This is the great and highest Recommendation of the Christian Doctrine : This is what, to a well-disposed Mind, would well-nigh satisfactorily prove, even without the Addition of any external Testimony, that the Revelation of Christianity could not possibly but come from God ; Seeing that, not only all its practical Precepts, but even all its *Articles of Belief* also, tend plainly to this one and the same End, to make Men universally amend and reform their Lives ; to recover and restore them to their original excellent State, from the Corruption and Misery which had been introduced by Sin ; and to establish upon Earth the Practice of everlasting Righteousness, and intire and hearty Obedience to the Will of God : Which would have been the Religion of Men (had they continued Innocent) in Paradise, and now is the Religion of Angels, and for ever will be the Religion of Saints in Heaven. Vain Men may value themselves upon their speculative Knowledge, right Opinions, and true and Orthodox Belief, separate from the Practice of Virtue and Righteousness ; But, as sure as the Gospel is true, no Belief whatsoever shall finally be of any Advantage to Men, any other-

otherwise than only so far as it corrects their Practice, hinders them from being *Workers of Iniquity*, Luke xiii. and makes them like unto God. 7.

Lastly, All the Doctrines of the Christian Faith do *Together* make up an infinitely more *consistent* and *rational Scheme of Belief*, than any that the *Wise*st of the Ancient Philosophers ever *did*, or the *Cunningest* of Modern Unbelievers *can* invent or contrive. This is evident from a summary View of the forementioned Scheme of the Christian Doctrines, wherein every Article has a just Dependence on the foregoing ones, and a close Connexion with those that follow; and the whole Account of the Order and Disposition of Things, from the Original to the Consummation of all Things, is one intire, regular, complete, consistent, and every Way a most rational Scheme: Whereas the *Wise*st of the *Ancient Philosophers*, that is, those of them who hit upon the greatest Number of single Truths, and taught the fewest Absurdities, were yet * never able to make out any universal, intire, and coherent System of Doctrines; and Scheme of the *Whole* State of Things, with any Manner of Probability: And the *Cunningest* of *Modern Deists* (besides that they must needs, in their own Way, believe some particular Things stranger and in themselves more incredible than any of the forementioned Christian Doctrines) cannot in the whole, as has been before shewn, frame to themselves any fixt and settled Principles, upon which to argue consistently, but must unavoidably either be perplexed with inextricable Absurdities, or confessedly recur to down-right Atheism. There have indeed, even among Christians themselves, been many Differences and Disputes about particular Doctrines:

And all of them Together make up the most consistent and rational Scheme of Belief in the World.

* *Diversi ac diversè omnia protulerunt, non annectentes nec causas rerum, nec consequentias, nec rationes; ut Summam illam, quæ continet universa, & compingerent & complerent. Lætant. lib. 7.*

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But (excepting such as have intolerably corrupted the very fundamental Doctrines, and even the main Design itself of the whole Christian Dispensation, of which there are too many Instances in Writers of the Romish Church especially) these Disputes among Christian, have not been, like those among the Philosophers, *de rerum summa*, concerning the whole Scheme and System of Things, but only concerning particular Explications of particular Doc-

trines; which Kind of Disputes do not at all * affect the Certainty of the whole Religion itself, nor ought in Reason to be any Manner of Hindrance to the † Effect which the plain and weightier and confessedly more important fundamental Doctrines ought to have upon the Hearts and Lives of Men.

* Sed perturbat nos opinionum varietas, hominumque dissensio: Et quia non idem contingit in sensibus, hos natura certos putamus; illa, quæ aliis sic, aliis secus, nec iisdem semper uno modo videntur, ficta esse dicimus. Quod est longè aliter. *Cic. de Legib. lib. 1.*

† See above, Page 182, 183.

XIV. Fifthly, *As this Revelation, to the Judgment of right and sober Reason, appears of itself highly credible and probable; and abundantly recommends itself in its native Simplicity, merely by its own intrinsic Goodness and Excellency, to the Practice of the most rational and considering Men, who are desirous in all their Actions to have Satisfaction and Comfort, and good Hope within themselves, from the Conscience of what they do: So it is moreover positively and directly proved to be actually and immediately sent us from God, by the many infallible Signs and Miracles, which the Author of it worked publicly as the Evidence of his divine Commission; by the exact Completion both of the Prophecies that went before concerning him, and of those that He himself delivered concerning Things that were to happen after; and by the Testimony of his Followers; which, in all its Circumstances, was the most credible, certain, and convincing*

vincing Evidence, that was ever given to any Matter of Fact in the World.

First, The Christian Revelation is positively and directly proved to be actually and immediately sent to us from God, by the many infallible Signs and Miracles, which the Author of it worked publicly as the Evidence of his Divine Commission.

Of the Life and Character of our Saviour, as an Evidence of the Truth of the Christian Revelation.

Besides the great Excellency and Reasonableness of the Doctrine considered in itself, of which I have already treated; 'Tis here of no small Moment to observe, that the Author of it (separate from all external Proof of his Divine Commission) appeared in all his Behaviour, Words and Actions, to be

neither an * Impostor nor an Enthusiast. His Life was Innocent and Spotless, spent intirely in serving the Ends of Holiness and Charity, in doing Good to the Souls and Bodies of Men, in exhorting them to Repentance, and inviting them to serve and glorify God.

* Πευσεον δὴ αὐτῶν, εἰ ποτέ τις ἄλλος τοιούτου πλάνου ἰσότηται, πραότητος καὶ ἐπιεικείας, σωφροσύνης τε καὶ τῆς ἄλλης ἀρετῆς διδάσκαλος τοῖς ἀπατωμένοις γεγονώς αἴτιος, &c. Euseb. Demonstrat. Evangelic. lib. 3. c. 3.

When his bitterest Enemies accused him, in order to take away his Life, they could not charge him with any Appearance of Vice or Immorality. And so far was he from being guilty of what they *did* accuse him of, namely, of Vain-glory and attempting to move Sedition, that once, when the admiring People would by Force have taken him and made him their King, he chose even to work a Miracle to avoid that, which was the only Thing that could be imagined to have been the Design of an Impostor. In like Manner, whoever seriously considers the Answers he gave to all Questions whether moral or captious, his occasional Discourses to his Disciples, and more especially the Wisdom and Excellency of his Sermon upon the Mount, which is as it were the System and Summary of his Doctrine, manifestly surpassing all the moral Instructions of the most celebrated Philosophers that

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ever lived, cannot, without the extremest Malice and Obstinacy in the World, charge him with *Enthusiasm*.

Of the
Miracles
of Christ,
as the Evi-
dence of his
Divine
Commis-
sion.

These Considerations cannot but add great Weight and Authority to his Doctrine, and make his own Testimony concerning himself exceedingly credible. But the *positive and direct* Proof of his Divine Commission are the *Miracles* which he worked for that Purpose: His healing the Sick: His giving Sight to the Blind: His casting out Devils: His raising the Dead: The Wonders that attended his Crucifixion: His own Resurrection from the Dead: His Appearance afterwards to his Disciples: And his Ascension visibly into Heaven.

These, and the rest of his stupendous Miracles, were, *to the Disciples that saw them*, sensible Demonstrations of our Lord's Divine Commission. And *to those who have lived since that Age*, they are as certain Demonstrations of the same Truth, as the Testimony of those first Disciples, who were Eye-witnesses of them, is certain and true.

To the *Disciples that saw them*, these Miracles were sensible and complete Demonstrations of our Lord's Divine Commission; because they were so *great*, and so *many*, and so *public*, and so *evident*, that it was absolutely impossible they should be the Effect of any *Art of Man*, of any *Chance* or *Fallacy*: And the Doctrine they were brought to confirm was of so good and holy a Tendency, that it was impossible he should be inabled to work them by the Power and Assistance of *Evil spirits*: So that, consequently, they must of Necessity have been performed, either *immediately* or *mediately*, by God himself.

Of Mira-
cles in ge-
neral.

But here, because there have been many Questions raised, and some Perplexity introduced, by the Disputes and different Opinions of learned Men,

con-

concerning the *Power of Working Miracles*, and concerning the *Extent of the Evidence* which Miracles give to the Truth of any Doctrine; and because it hath been much controverted, whether true Miracles can be worked by any less Power than the immediate Power of God; and whether, to complete the Evidence of a Miracle, the Nature of the Doctrine, pretended to be proved thereby, is requisite to be taken into the Consideration, or no; It may not perhaps be improper, upon this Occasion, to endeavour to set this whole Matter in its true Light, as briefly and clearly as I can.

1st, then, In Respect of the *Power of God*, and *That, in*
in Respect to the *Nature of the Things themselves*, *Respect of*
absolutely speaking, all Things that are possible *the Power*
at all, that is, which imply not a direct Contra- *of God, all*
diction, are *equally and alike easy* to be done. The *Things are*
Power of God extends equally to great Things, *alike easy.*
as to small; and to many, as to few: And the
one makes no more Difficulty at all, or Resistance
to his Will, than the other.

'Tis not therefore a right Distinction to define *That there-*
or distinguish a *Miracle* by any *absolute Difficulty* *fore Mira-*
in the Nature of the Thing itself to be done, as if *cles ought*
the Things we call *Natural* were absolutely and in *not to be*
their own Nature easier to be effected, than those *defined by*
that we look upon as *Miraculous*. On the contrary, *any abso-*
'tis evident and undeniable, that 'tis at least as great *lute Diffi-*
an Act of Power to cause *the Sun or a Planet* to *culty in the*
Move at all, as to cause it to *stand still at any Time*. *Nature of*
Yet this latter we call a Miracle; the former, not. *the Things*
And *to restore the Dead to Life*, which is an Instance *themselves*
of an extraordinary Miracle, is in itself plainly *to be done.*
altogether as easy, as to dispose Matter at first into
such Order, as to *form a human Body* in that which
we commonly call a natural Way. So that, abso-
lutely speaking, in *This strict and philosophical Sense*,

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either *nothing* is Miraculous, namely, if we have Respect to the Power of God ; or, if we regard our own Power and Understanding, then almost *every Thing*, as well what we call natural, as what we call supernatural, is in *this Sense* really Miraculous ; and 'tis only *Usualness* or *Unusualness* that makes the Distinction.

What Degrees of Power God may have communicated to Created Beings is not possible for us to determine.

2. What *Degrees of Power* God may reasonably be supposed to have communicated to *Created Beings*, to *subordinate Intelligences*, to *good or evil Angels*, is by no Means possible for us to determine. Some Things absolutely impossible for *Men* to effect, 'tis evident, may easily be within the natural Powers of *Angels* ; and some Things beyond the Power of *inferior Angels* may as easily be supposed to be within the natural Power of others that are *superior* to Them ; and so on. So that, excepting the *original Power of Creating*, which we cannot indeed conceive communicable to Things which were themselves created, we can hardly affirm *with any Certainty*, that any particular Effect, how great or miraculous soever it may seem to us, is beyond the Power of all *Created Beings* in the Universe to have produced.

That therefore a Miracle is not rightly defined to be such an Effect as could not have been produced by any less Power than the Divine Omnipotence.

'Tis not therefore a right Distinction to define a *Miracle* (as some very learned and very pious Men have done) to be such an Effect as could not have been produced by any less Power than the *Divine Omnipotence*. There is no Instance of any Miracle in Scripture, which to an ordinary Spectator would necessarily imply an immediate Creation of something out of nothing : And consequently such a Spectator could never be *certain*, that the miraculous Effect was beyond the Power of all created Beings in the Universe to produce. There is one Supposition indeed, upon which the Opinion of *all Miracles* being necessarily the immediate Effects of the *Divine Omnipotence* may be defended ; And that is, if God,

God, together with the natural Powers wherewith he hath indued all subordinate Intelligent Beings, has likewise given a Law or Restraint, whereby they be hindered from ever interposing in this lower World, to produce any of those Effects which we call miraculous or supernatural: But then, how certain soever it is, that all Created Beings are under some particular Laws and Restraints, yet it can never be proved, that they are under such Restraints universally, perpetually, and without Exception: And without this, a Spectator that sees a Miracle, can never be certain that it was not done by some Created Intelligence. Reducing the natural Power of Created Beings to as low a Degree as any one can desire to suppose will help nothing in this Matter; For, supposing (which is very unreasonable to suppose) that the natural Powers of the highest Angels were no greater than the natural Powers of Men, yet since thereby an Angel would be inabled to do all That invisibly, which a Man can do visibly, he would even in this Supposition be naturally able to do numberless Things, which we should esteem the greatest of Miracles.

3. All Things that are *Done* in the World, are done either immediately by God himself, or by *created Intelligent Beings*, Matter being evidently not at all capable of any *Laws* or *Powers* whatsoever, any more than it is capable of Intelligence; excepting only this *One Negative Power*, that every Part of it will, of itself, always and necessarily continue in that State, whether of *Rest* or *Motion*, wherein it at present is. So that all those Things which we commonly say are the Effects of the *Natural Powers of Matter*, and *Laws of Motion*, of *Gravitation*, *Attraction*, or the like, are indeed (if we will speak strictly and properly) the Effects of God's acting upon Matter continually and every Moment, ei-
All Things that are done in the World, are done either immediately by God himself, or by created Intelligent Beings, Matter being capable of no Laws or Powers. And consequently there is,

The EVIDENCE of Natural

ing,
no such
Thing as
the Course
or Power
of Nature.
Page 14.

ther immediately by himself, or mediately by some created intelligent Beings : (Which Observation, by the Way, furnishes us, as has been before noted, with an excellent natural Demonstration of *Providence*.) Consequently there is no such Thing as what Men commonly call the *Course of Nature*, or the *Power of Nature*. The Course of Nature, truly and properly speaking, is nothing else but the *Will of God* producing certain Effects in a continued, regular, constant and uniform Manner : Which Course or Manner of Acting, being in every Moment perfectly *Arbitrary*, is as easy to be *altered* at any Time, as to be *preserved*. And if (as seems most probable) this continual Acting upon Matter be performed by the Subserviency of created Intelligences appointed to that Purpose by the Supreme Creator ; then 'tis as easy for any of Them, and as much within their natural Power (by the Permission of God) to *alter* the Course of Nature at any Time, or in any Respect, as to *preserve* or *continue* it.

That there-
fore a Mi-
racle is not
rightly de-
fined to
be That
which is
against the
Course of
Nature, or
above the
natural
Powers of
Created
Agents.

'Tis not therefore a right Distinction to define a *Miracle* to be That which is *against the Course of Nature*, meaning, by the *Course of Nature*, the *Power of Nature*, or the *Natural Powers of Created Agents*. For, in this Sense, 'tis no more against the Course of Nature for an Angel to *keep a Man from sinking in the Water*, than for a Man to *hold a Stone from falling in the Air*, by over-powering the Law of Gravitation ; and yet the one is a Miracle, the other not so. In like Manner, 'tis no more above the natural Power of a created Intelligence to *stop the Motion of the Sun* or of a Planet, than to *continue to carry it on in its usual Course* ; and yet the former is a Miracle, the latter not so. But if, by the *Course of Nature*, be meant only (as it truly signifies) the *constant and uniform Manner* of God's acting either immediately or mediately in preserving and continuing the Order of the World ; then,

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in That Sense, indeed a Miracle may be rightly defined to be an Effect produced contrary to the usual Course or Order of Nature, by the unusual Interposition of some Intelligent Being Superior to Men ; as I shall have Occasion presently to observe more particularly.

And from this Observation, we may easily discover the Vanity and Unreasonableness of that obstinate Prejudice, which Modern Deists have universally taken up, against the Belief of Miracles in general. They see, that Things generally go on in a constant and regular Method ; that the Frame and Order of the World is preserved by Things being disposed and managed in an uniform Manner ; that certain Causes produce certain Effects in a continued Succession, according to certain fixed Laws or Rules ; and from hence they conclude, very weakly and unphilosophically, that there are in *Matter* certain necessary *Laws* or *Powers*, the Result of which is That which they call the *Course of Nature* ; which they think is impossible to be changed or altered, and consequently that there can be no such Thing as *Miracles*. Whereas on the contrary, if they would consider Things duly, they could not but see, that dull and lifeless Matter is utterly incapable of obeying any *Laws*, or of being indued with any *Powers* ; and that therefore That Order and Disposition of Things, which they vulgarly call the *Course of Nature*, cannot possibly be any Thing else, but the *Arbitrary Will and Pleasure of God* exerting itself and acting upon Matter continually, either immediately by itself, or mediately by some subordinate Intelligent Agents, according to certain Rules of Uniformity and Proportion, fixed indeed and constant, but which yet are made such merely by Arbitrary Constitution, not by any Sort of Necessity in the Things themselves ; as has been abundantly proved in my *former Discourse* :
And

The unreasonableness of those who deny the Possibility of Miracles in general.

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And consequently it cannot be denied, but that 'tis altogether as easy to *alter the Course of Nature*, as to *preserve* it; that is, that Miracles, excepting only that they are more unusual, are in *themselves*, and in the *Nature and Reason of the Thing*, as credible in all Respects, and as easy to be believed, as any of those we call natural Effects.

Some Effects prove the constant Providence of God, and Others prove the occasional Interposition either of God himself, or of some Intelligent Being Superior to Man.

4. Those Effects which are produced in the World regularly and constantly, which we call the *Works of Nature*, prove to us in general, the Being, the Power, and the other Attributes of God. Those Effects, which, upon any *rare and extraordinary Occasion*, are produced in such Manner, that 'tis manifest they could neither have been done by any *Power or Art of Man*, nor by what we call *Chance*, that is, by any Composition or Result of those Laws which are God's *constant and uniform* Actings upon Matter; these undeniably prove to us the immediate and *occasional* Interposition either of God himself, or at least of some intelligent Agent Superior to Men, at That particular Time, and on That particular Account. For Instance, The regular and continual Effects of the *Power of Gravitation*, and of the *Laws of Motion*; of the *Mechanic*, and of the *Animal Powers*; All these prove to us in general, the Being, the Power, the Presence, and the constant Operation, either immediate or mediate, of God in the World. But if, upon any particular Occasion, we should see a *Stone suspended in the Air*, or a *Man walking upon the Water*, without any visible Support; a *chronical Disease cured by a Word speaking*, or a *dead and corrupted Body restored to Life in a Moment*; we could not then doubt, but there was an *extraordinary* Interposition either of God himself, in order to signify his Pleasure upon that particular Occasion; or at least of some Intelligent

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Intelligent Agent far superior to Man, in order to bring about some particular Design.

5. Whether such an Extraordinary Interposition of some Power Superior to Men be the immediate Interposition of *God himself*, or of some *good Angel*, or of some *evil Angel*, can hardly be distinguished certainly, merely by the *Work* or *Miracle itself*: (except there be a plain *Creation* of something out of nothing, which, as I have said, there does not *certainly* appear to be in any of the Miracles recorded in Scripture :) Because 'tis impossible for Us to know with any *Certainty*, either that the natural Power of good Angels, or of evil ones, extends not beyond such or such a certain Limit; or that God always restrains them from exercising their natural Powers in producing such or such particular Effects. Some singular Miracles, such as *Raising the Dead*, there is indeed all the Reason in the World to believe are absolutely beyond the Power of evil Spirits to effect; because we have the greatest Reason to believe, that the Souls of Men are in the Hand of God, and cannot be removed by the natural Power of any inferior Beings. But there are not many other Instances, wherein we can *certainly* say or determine, that this or that particular Thing is absolutely beyond the natural Power of Good or Evil Spirits.

'Tis not therefore a right Distinction, to suppose the Wonders which the Scripture attributes to evil Spirits, to be mere *Præstigiæ*, *Sleights*, or *Delusions*. For if the Devil has any natural Power of doing any Thing at all, even but so much as the meanest of Men; and be not restrained by God from exercising that natural Power; 'tis evident he will be able, by Reason of his Invisibilty, to work *true and real Miracles*. Neither is it a right Distinction to suppose the Miracles of Evil Spirits, not to be *real Effects*

Whether such Interposition be the immediate Work of God, or of Some Good or Evil Angel, can hardly be discovered merely by the Work itself.

That there is no reason to suppose all the Wonders worked by Evil Spirits to be mere Delusions.

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Effects in the Things where they appear, but *Impositions upon the Senses* of the Spectators: For to impose in this Manner upon the Senses of Men (not by Sleights and Delusions, but by really so affecting the Organs of Sense, as to make Things appear what they are not) is to all Intents and Purposes as *true* a Miracle, and as *great* an one, as making real Changes in the Things themselves.

How we
are to di-
stinguish
Miracles
worked by
God for
the Proof
of any Doc-
trine from
the Frauds
of Evil
Spirits.

6. When therefore upon any particular Occasion, for Instance, when at the Will of a Person who teaches some new Doctrine as coming from God, and in Testimony to the Truth of that Doctrine, there is plainly and manifestly an Interposition of some *Superior* Power, producing such miraculous Effects as have been before mentioned: The only possible Ways, by which a Spectator may certainly and infallibly distinguish, whether those Miracles be indeed the Works either immediately of God himself, or (which is the very same Thing) of some good Angel employed by him; and consequently the Doctrine witnessed by the Miracles be infallibly true and divinely attested; Or whether, on the contrary, the Miracles be the Works of Evil Spirits, and consequently the Doctrine a Fraud and Imposition upon Men: The only possible Ways (I say) of distinguishing this Matter certainly and infallibly are these: *If* the Doctrine attested by Miracles be in itself *impious*, or manifestly *tending to promote Vice*, then without all Question the Miracles, how great soever they may appear to Us, are neither worked by God himself, nor by his Commission; because our natural Knowledge of the Attributes of God, and of the necessary Difference between Good and Evil, is greatly of more Force to prove any such Doctrine to be false, than any Miracles in the World can be to prove it true. As, for Example, suppose a Man pretending to be a Prophet,

phet should work any Miracle, or give any Sign or Wonder whatsoever, in order to draw Men from the Worship of the True God, and tempt them to Idolatry, and to the Practice of such Vices as in all Heathen Nations have usually attended the Worship of False God; nothing can be more infallibly certain, than that such Miracles ought at first Sight to be rejected as Diabolical. *If the Doctrine attested by Miracles be in itself indifferent, that is, such as cannot by the Light of Nature and right Reason alone be certainly known whether it be true or false; and at the same Time, in Opposition to it, and in Proof of the direct contrary Doctrine, there be worked other Miracles, more and greater than the former, or at least attended with such Circumstances as evidently shew the Power by which these latter are worked to be Superior to the Power that worked the former; then That Doctrine which is attested by the Superior Power, must necessarily be believed to be Divine. This was the Case of Moses and the Egyptian Magicians. The Magicians worked several Miracles to prove that Moses was an Impostor, and not sent of God; Moses, to prove his Divine Commission, worked Miracles more and greater than theirs; or else (which is the very same Thing) the Power by which He worked his Miracles, restrained the Power by which They worked theirs from being able at that Time to work all the same Miracles that He did; and so appeared evidently the Superior Power: Wherefore it was necessarily to be believed, that Moses's Commission was truly from God. If, in the last Place, the Doctrine attested by Miracles be such as in its own Nature and Consequences tends to promote the Honour and Glory of God, and the Practice of universal Righteousness amongst Men; and yet nevertheless be not in itself demonstrable, nor could without Revelation have been discovered to be actually true; (or even*

if

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Matt. xii.
25.

if it was but only indifferent in itself, and such as could not be proved to be any way contrary to, or inconsistent with these great Ends;) and there be no Pretence of more or greater Miracles on the opposite Side, to contradict it; (Which is the Case of the *Doctrine and Miracles of Christ* :) Then the Miracles are unquestionably Divine, and the Doctrine must without all Controversy be acknowledged as an immediate and infallible Revelation from God: Because, (besides that it cannot be supposed that Evil Spirits would overthrow their own Power and Kingdom) should God, in such Cases as these, permit Evil Spirits to work Miracles to impose upon Men, the Error would be absolutely invincible; and That would in all Respects be the very same Thing, as if God worked the Miracles to deceive Men himself. No Man can doubt, but Evil Spirits, if they have any natural Powers at all, have Power to destroy Mens *Bodies and Lives*, and to bring upon Men innumerable other Calamities; which yet in Fact 'tis evident God restrains them from doing, by having set them Laws and Bounds which they cannot pass. Now, for the very same Reason, 'tis infinitely certain that God restrains them likewise from imposing upon Mens *Minds and Understandings*, in all such Cases where Wise, and Honest, and Virtuous Men would have no possible Way left, by which they could discover the Imposition.

The Difference between those who teach that the immediate Power of God is, or is not, necessarily requisite to the working of a

And here at last the Difference between Those who believe that all Miracles necessarily require the immediate Power of God himself to effect them, and those who believe created Spirits able to work Miracles, is not very great. They who believe all Miracles to be effected only by the *immediate Power of God*, must do it upon this Ground, that they suppose God by a perpetual Law restrains all subordinate intelligent Agents from interposing at any Time to alter the regular Course of Things in this lower

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lower World ; (for to say that created Spirits have *Miracle* ; not otherwise a *Natural Power*, when *unrestrained*, *is not very great at bottom*, to do what we call Miracles, is saying that those invisible Agents have no Power naturally to do any Thing at all.) And they who believe that *subordinate Beings* have Power to work Miracles, must yet of Necessity suppose that God restrains them in all such Cases at least, where there would not be sufficient Marks left, by which the Frauds of evil Spirits could be clearly distinguished from the Testimony and Commission of God.

And now from these few clear and undeniable Propositions it evidently follows,

1st, That the true *Definition* of a *Miracle*, in the *Theological* Sense of the Word, is this, that it is a Work effected in a Manner *unusual*, or different from the common and regular Method of Providence, by the Interposition either of God himself, or of some intelligent Agent superior to Man, for the Proof or Evidence of some particular Doctrine, or in Attestation to the Authority of some particular Person. And if a Miracle so worked, be not opposed by some plainly superior Power ; nor be brought to attest a Doctrine either *contradictory* in itself, or *vicious* in its Consequences ; (a Doctrine of which Kind no Miracles in the World can be sufficient to prove) then the Doctrine so attested must necessarily be looked upon as Divine, and the Worker of the Miracle entertained as having infallibly a Commission from God. *The true Definition of a Miracle.*

2. From hence it appears, that the complete *Demonstration* of our Saviour's being a Teacher sent from God was, to the Disciples who *saw his Miracles*, plainly This : That the *Doctrine* he taught being in itself possible, and in its Consequences tending to promote the Honour of God and true Righteousness among Men ; and the *Miracles* he worked being such, that there neither was nor could *The Strength of the Evidence of our Saviour's Miracles.*

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could be any Pretence of more or greater Miracles to be set up in Opposition to them; it was as infallibly certain that he had truly a Divine Commission, as it was certain that God would not himself impose upon Men a necessary and invincible Error.

Concerning
the Objec-
tion, that
we prove
in a Circle
the Mira-
cles by the
Doctrine,
and the
Doctrine
by the Mi-
racles.

3. From hence it appears how little Reason there is to object, as some have done, that we prove in a Circle the *Doctrine* by the *Miracles*, and the *Miracles* by the *Doctrine*. For the *Miracles*, in this Way of reasoning, are not at all proved by the *Doctrine*; but only the *Possibility* and the *good Tendency*, or at least the *Indifferency* of the *Doctrine*, are a necessary Condition or Circumstance, without which the *Doctrine* is not capable of being proved by any *Miracles*. 'Tis indeed the *Miracles* only, that prove the *Doctrine*; and not the *Doctrine*, that proves the *Miracles*: But then in order to this End, that the *Miracles* may prove the *Doctrine*, 'tis always necessarily to be first supposed that the *Doctrine* be such as is in its Nature capable of being proved by *Miracles*. The *Doctrine* must be in itself *possible* and *capable to be proved*, and then *Miracles* will prove it to be *actually and certainly* true. The *Doctrine* is not first known or supposed to be *true*, and then the *Miracles* proved by it; but the *Doctrine* must be first known to be such as is *possible to be true*, and then *Miracles* will prove that it *actually* is so. Some *Doctrines* are in their own Nature *necessarily and demonstrably* true, such as are all those which concern the Obligation of plain *moral Precepts*; and these neither need nor can receive any stronger Proof from *Miracles*, than what they have already (though not perhaps so clearly indeed to all Capacities) from the Evidence of right Reason. Other *Doctrines* are in their own Nature *necessarily false and impossible to be true*; such as are all *Absurdities and Contradictions*,

dictions, and all Doctrines that tend to promote *Vice*; And these can never receive any Degree of Proof from all the Miracles in the World. Lastly, Other Doctrines are in their own Nature *indifferent*, or *possible*, or perhaps *probable* to be true; And these could not have been known to be positively true, but by the Evidence of Miracles, which prove them to be certain. To apply this to the *Doctrine* and *Miracles* of *Christ*: The moral Part of our Saviour's Doctrine would have appeared infallibly true; whether he had ever worked any Miracles or no. The rest of his Doctrine was what evidently Tended to promote the Honour of God, and the Practice of Righteousness among Men: Therefore That Part also of his Doctrine was possible and very probable to be true; But yet it could not from thence be known to be certainly true, nor ought to have been received as a Revelation from God, unless it had been proved by undeniable *Miracles*. And the Miracles he worked did indeed undeniably prove it to be the Doctrine of God. Nevertheless, had his Doctrine in any Part of it been either absurd and contradictory in itself, or vicious in its Tendency and Consequences, no Miracles could then possibly have proved it to have been true. 'Tis evident therefore, that the Nature of the Doctrine to be proved must be taken into the Consideration, as a necessary Circumstance; and yet, that only the *Miracles* are properly the Proof of the *Doctrine*, and not the *Doctrine* of the *Miracles*.

4. From hence it follows, that the pretended *Of the* Miracles of *Apollonius Tyaneus*, *Aristeas Proconnesius*, *pretended* and some few others among the Heathens, even *Miracles* supposing them to have been *true Miracles*, (which *of Apollonius and* yet there is no Reason at all to believe, because *others.* they are very poorly attested, and are in themselves very mean and trifling, as has been fully shewn by *Eusebius* in his Book against *Hierocles*, and by ma-

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ny late Writers ; but supposing them, I say, to have been *true Miracles*) yet they will prove nothing at all to the Disadvantage of Christianity ; Because they were worked either without any Pretence of confirming any new Doctrine at ail ; or else to prove absurd and foolish Things ; or to establish Idolatry and the Worship of False Gods ; And, consequently, they could not be done by the Divine Power and Authority, nor bear any Kind

of * Comparison with the Miracles of *Christ*, that were worked to attest a Doctrine which tended in the highest Degree to promote the Honour of God and the general Reformation of Mankind.

* Δία τι οὐχὶ καὶ βεβαιωσάντων τὰς ἐπαγγελουμένας τὰς δυνάμεις ἐξετάσομεν ἀπὸ τῆς εἰς καὶ τῆς ἡθῆς καὶ τῶν ἐπακολούθουντων ταῖς δυνάμεσιν, ἥτοι εἰς βλάβην τῶν ἀνθρώπων, ἢ εἰς ἐδῶν ἐπανόρθωσιν. *Origen. advers. Cels. lib. 2.*

Μέσον τοίνυν σαυτὸν γήσας τῶν περὶ τῆς Ἀριστείας γινόμενων καὶ τῶν περὶ τῆς Ἰησοῦ ἰσορρομένων, ἴδε εἰ μὴ ἐκ τῆς ἀπαβαλῆς, καὶ τῶν ὠφελουμένων εἰς ἡδῶν ἐπανόρθωσιν, καὶ εὐλάβειαν τὴν πρὸς τὸν ἐπὶ πασι θεόν, εἶναι εἰπεῖν ὅτι πιστευτέον μὲν ὡς οὐκ ἀθεοὶ γενομένοις τοῖς περὶ Ἰησοῦ ἰσορρομένοις, οὐχὶ δὲ τοῖς περὶ τῆς Προκολλησίου Ἀριστείας. Τὶ μὲν γὰρ βουλομένη ἡ πρόνοια τὰ περὶ τὸν Ἀριστεάν παραδοξα ἐπραγματεύετο, καὶ τί ὠφελῆσαι τῷ τῶν ἀνθρώπων γένει βουλομένη, τὰ τηλικαῦτα (ὡς οἶμι) ἐπεδείκνυτο, οὐκ ἔχεις λέγειν. *Id. lib. 3.*

To return therefore to the Argument : The Miracles (I say) which our Saviour worked, were, *to the Disciples that saw them*, sensible Demonstrations of his Divine Commission : And, *to those who have lived since that Age*, they are as certain Demonstrations of the same Truth, as the Testimony of those first Disciples who were Eye-witnesses of them, is certain and true : *Which I shall have Occasion to consider presently.*

Of the fulfilling the Prophecies, as an Evidence of our Saviour's Divine Commission

Secondly, The Divine Authority of the Christian Revelation is positively and directly proved by the *Exact Completion both of all those Prophecies that went before concerning our Lord, and of those that He Himself delivered concerning Things that were to happen after.*

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Concerning the Messiah it was foretold, (*Gen. 49. 10.*) that he *should come, before the Sceptre departed from Judah*: And accordingly Christ appeared a little before the Time when the Jewish Government was totally destroyed by the Romans. *Of the Prophecies that went before concerning the Messiah.* It was foretold that he should come before the Destruction of the second Temple, (*Hagg. 2. 7.*) *The Desire of all Nations shall come, and I will fill this House with Glory, saith the Lord of Hosts; the Glory of this latter House shall be greater than of the former*: And accordingly Christ appeared some Time before the Destruction of the City and Temple. It was foretold, that he should come at the End of 490 Years after the Rebuilding of *Jerusalem*, which had been laid waste during the Captivity, (*Dan. 9. 24.*;) and that he should *be cut off*; and that, after That, *the City and Sanctuary should be destroyed and made desolate*: And accordingly, at what Time soever the Beginning of the four hundred and ninety Years can, according to any Interpretation of the Words, be fixed; the End of them will fall about the Time of Christ's appearing; and 'tis well known how intirely the *City and Sanctuary* were destroyed some Years after *his being cut off*. It was foretold that he should do many great and beneficial Miracles; that *the Eyes of the Blind* (*Isai. 35. 5.*) *should be opened, and the Ears of the Deaf unstopped*; that *the lame Man should leap as an Hart, and the Tongue of the Dumb sing*: And this was literally fulfilled in the Miracles of Christ; *The Blind received their Sight*, (*Matt. 11. 5.*) *and the Lame walked; the Deaf heard, &c.* It was foretold that he should die a violent Death, (*Isai. 53. throughout*) and That *not for himself*, (*Dan. 9. 26.*) but *for our Transgressions*, (*Isai. 53. 5, 6, & 12.*) *for the Iniquity of us all*, and that he might bear *the Sin of many*: All which was exactly accomplished in the Sufferings of Christ. It was foretold, (*Gen. 49. 10.*) that

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to him should the Gathering of the People be, and (Psal. 2. 8.) that God would give him the Heathen for his Inheritance, and the utmost Parts of the Earth for his Possession: Which was punctually fulfilled by the wonderful Success of the Gospel, and its universal Spreading through the World. Lastly, Many minuter Circumstances were foretold of the Messiah; that he should be of the *Tribe of Judah*, and of the *Seed of David*; that he should be born in the Town of *Bethlehem* (Mic. 5. 2;) that he should ride upon an *Ass*, in humble Triumph, into the City of *Jerusalem*, (Zech. 9. 9;) that he should be sold for thirty Pieces of Silver, (Zech. 11. 12;) that he should be Scourged, Buffeted, and Spit upon, (Isai. 50. 6;) that his Hands and Feet should be pierced, (Psal. 22. 16;) that he should be numbered among Malefactors, (Isai. 53. 12;) that he should have Gall and Vinegar offered him to drink, (Psal. 69. 21;) that they who saw him crucified should mock at him, and at his Trusting in God to deliver him, (Psal. 22. 8;) that the Soldiers should cast Lots for his Garments, (Psal. 22. 18;) that he should make his Grave with the Rich, (Isai. 53. 9;) and that he should rise again without seeing Corruption, (Psal. 16. 10.) All which Circumstances were fulfilled, to the greatest possible Exactness, in the Person of *Christ*: Not to mention the numberless typical Representations, which had likewise evidently their complete Accomplishment in Him. And 'tis no less evident, that none of these Prophecies can possibly be applied to any other Person that ever pretended to be the Messiah.

Of the
Prophecies
that Christ
himself ac-
complished
concerning
things that
were to
be done af-

Further, The Prophecies or Predictions which Christ delivered Himself, concerning Things that were to happen *after*, are no less strong Proofs of the Truth and Divine Authority of his Doctrine, than the Prophecies were, which went *before* concerning Him. He did very particularly and at several times fore-

foretell his own Death, and the Circumstances of it, (*Matt. 16. 21.*) that the *chief Priests and Scribes should condemn him to Death, and deliver him to the Gentiles, that is, to Pilate and the Roman Soldiers, to mock, and scourge, and crucify him, (Matt. 20. 18 & 19;)* that he should be *betrayed* into their Hands, (*Matt. 20. 18;*) that *Judas Iscariot* was the Person who would *betray him*, (*Matt. 26. 23;*) that all his Disciples would *forsake him and flee*, (*Matt. 26. 31;*) that *Peter*, particularly, would *thrice deny him in one Night*, (*Mar. 14. 30.*) He foretold further, that he would *rise again the third Day*, (*Matt. 16. 21;*) that, after his Ascension, he would send down the Holy Ghost upon his Apostles, (*Job. 15. 26;*) which should enable them to work many Miracles, (*Mar. 16. 17.*) He foretold also *the Destruction of Jerusalem* with such very particular Circumstances, in the whole 24th Chapter of *St. Matthew*, and the 13th of *St. Mark*, and 21st of *St. Luke*, that no Man who reads * *Josephus's History* of that dreadful and unparalleled Calamity, can, without the greatest Obstinacy imaginable, doubt of our Saviour's divine Fore-knowledge. Lastly, He foretold likewise many Particulars concerning the future Success of the Gospel, and what should happen to several of his Disciples: He foretold what Opposition and Persecution they should meet withal in their Preaching, (*Matt. 10. 17;*) He foretold what particular Kind of Death *St. Peter* should die, (*John*

* Very remarkable also is the History, recorded by a Heathen Writer, of what happened upon *Julian's* attempting to rebuild the Temple: *Imperii sui memoriam magnitudine operum gestiens propagare, ambitiosum quondam apud Hierosolymam templum, quod post multa & internecina certamina obsidente Vespasiano posteaq; Tito ægrè est expugnatum, instaurare sumptibus cogitabat immodicis; Negotiumq; maturandum Alypio dederat Antiocheni, qui olim Britannias curaverat pro Præfæctis. Cum itaq; rei idem instaret Alypius, juvaretque provinciæ rector; metuendi globi flammarum propi-*

fundamenta crebris assultibus erumpentes fecere locum exstis aliquoties operantibus inaccessum; Hocque modo, elemento destinatus repellente, cessavit inceptum. Ammian. Marcellin. lib. 22. sub initio.

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21. 18;) and hinted, that *St. John* should live till after the Destruction of *Jerusalem*, (*John* 21. 22;) and foretold, that, notwithstanding all Opposition and Persecutions, the Gospel should yet have such Success, as to spread itself over the World, (*Matt.* 16. 18; 24. 14; 28. 19.) All and every one of which Particulars were exactly accomplished, without failing in any Respect.

Some of these Things are of permanent and visible Effects, even unto this Day. Particularly the Captivity and Dispersion of the Jews, through all Nations, for more than 1600 Years; and yet their continuing a distinct People, in order to the fulfilling the Prophecies of Things still future: This (I say) is particularly a permanent Proof of the Truth of the Ancient Prophecies. But the greatest Part of the Instances above-mentioned were *sensible and ocular Demonstrations* of the Truth of our Lord's Doctrine, *only* to those Persons who lived at the Time when they happened: The Credibility of whose Testimony, therefore, shall be considered presently in its proper Place.

But, before I proceed to This, it may not be improper in this Place to take Notice of Some Objections, which have of late been revived and urged against this whole Notion both of the Prophecies themselves, and of the Application of them to Christ. The Sum and Strength of which Objections is briefly This:

That all the Promises supposed to be made to the Jews before Christ's Time, of a *Messias* or Deliverer, were understood and meant of some "Temporal Deliverer" only, who should restore to the *Israelites* a mere worldly Kingdom, without the least Imagination of a Spiritual Deliverance," or of any such Saviour as is preached in the New Testament.

That, consequently, "All the Prophecies" in the Old Testament, applied to Christ by the Apostles

stles in the New, are applied to him in a Sense merely "*typical, mystical, allegorical, or enigmatical*;" in a Sense "*different from the obvious and literal*" Sense;" by "*new Interpretations put upon them, not agreeable to the obvious and literal Meaning of those Books*" from whence they are cited. That is to say, That the Prophecies were all of them intended concerning *Other Persons*, and *Other Persons Only*; and therefore are falsely and groundlessly applied either to *Christ* in particular, or in general to the Expectation of *Any such Messiah* as should introduce a *Spiritual and Eternal Kingdom*.

That there are several Passages, cited by the Apostles out of the Old Testament, which are either *not found* there *at all*, or else are very *different*, in the Text itself, from the Citations alledged; and consequently are by the Apostles either *misunderstood* or *misapplied*.

That even *Miracles* themselves "*can never render a Foundation valid, which is in itself invalid; can never make a False Inference true; can never make a Prophecy fulfilled, which is not fulfilled*;" can never make those Things to be *spoken concerning Christ*, which were *not spoken concerning Christ*. And consequently, that the *Miracles* said to have been worked by Christ, could not possibly have been *really* worked by him, but must of Necessity, together with the *Whole System* both of the Old and New Testament, have been wholly the *Effect* of *Imagination and Enthusiasm*, if not of *Imposture*.

Now, in order to enable every careful and sincere Reader to find a *Satisfactory Answer* to These and all other Objections of the like Nature, I would lay before him the following Considerations:

1. I suppose it to have been already proved in the foregoing Part of this Discourse, that there

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IS a GOD; and that the Nature and Circumstances of Men, and the necessary Perfections of God, do demonstrate the *Obligations* and the *Motives* of *NATURAL RELIGION*; that is, that God is a *MORAL* as well as *Natural* Governor of the World. Whoever denies *Either* of these Assertions, is obliged to invalidate the Arguments alledged for Proof of them in the former Part of This Book, before he has any Right to intermix *Atheistical* Arguments and Objections in the *present* Question: It being evidently ridiculous, in All who believe not that God is, and that he is a *Moral Judge* as well as *Natural Governor*, to argue at all about a *Revelation* concerning *Religion*, or to make any Inquiry whether it be *from God* or no.

* See above,
Prop. VII.
§ 4. Page
165.

2. As God has in *Fact* made known even demonstrable Truths, * *Natural* and *Moral* Truths, not to All Men equally, but in *different Degrees* and *Proportions*, to such as have a *Disposition* and *Desire* to *inquire* after them: So 'tis agreeable to Reason and to the Analogy of God's Proceedings, to believe, that he *may possibly*, by *Revelation* and *Tradition*, have given some *further Degrees of Light*, to Such as are sincerely desirous to know and obey him, so that they who will *Do* his Will, may *Know* of the Doctrine whether it be of God. As our *Natural Knowledge of Moral and Religious Truths* in *Fact* is, so *Revelation* possibly may further be, as it were a *Light Shining in a dark Place*.

3. It appears in History, that the Great Truths and Obligations of *Natural Religion* have from the Beginning been *Confirmed* by a perpetual *Tradition* in particular *Families*, who, though in the midst of *Idolatrous Nations*, yet stedfastly adhered to the *Worship of the God of Nature*, the *One God of the Universe*. And by the *Nation of the Jews* (notwithstanding all their Corruptions in *Practice*, yet in the
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System and Constitution of their Religion) has the same *Tradition* been continually preserved. Whereby they have been as it were a *City upon a Hill*, a *standing Testimony* against an Idolatrous World.

4. Among the Writings of all, even the most ancient and learned Nations, there are *None but* the Books of the *Jews*, which (agreeably to the *above demonstrated Truths* concerning the *God of Nature* and the Foundations of *Natural Religion*) have, exclusive of *Chance* and of *Necessity*, ascribed either the Original of *the Universe* in general (an *Universe* full of infinite *Variety* and *Choice*,) to the Will and Operation of an *Intelligent and Free Cause*, or given any tolerable Account, in particular, of the *Formation of this our Earth* into its present *habitable State*.

5. But in *These Books*, there is, not only (in order to prevent Idolatry) a full Account (agreeable to the Principles of natural Reason) how the Heavens and the Earth, and all Things therein contained, are the *Creatures of GOD*; but moreover, an *uniform Series* of History, from the Infancy of Mankind; *consistent with itself*, and with the State of the *Jewish and Christian Church at this Day*, and with the *Possibilities* of the predicted Series for the future, for several Thousands of Years. Which *Consistency*, with the *Possibilities* of such predicted future Events, could not be *by Chance* (as I shall shew presently) but is itself a great and *standing Miracle*.

6. In *These Books*, agreeably to the *Hopes and Expectations* naturally founded on the *Divine Perfections*, God did from the Beginning make, and has all along continued to his Church or True Worshipers, a *Promise* that *Truth and Virtue* should finally prevail, should prevail over the *Spirit of Error and Wickedness*, of *Delusion and Disobedience*. That the *Seed of the Woman* should (1) *bruise the Serpent's* (1) Gen. 3. *Head*: That, among *Her Posterity*, should arise a 15.

Deliverance

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Deliverance from the Delusion and Power of Sin,
 (2) Rom. 16. 20. by which Satan (2) should be bruised under their Feet. That in particular from the Seed of Abraham, and from the Family of Isaac, and from the Posterity of Jacob, and from the House of David, should arise the Accomplishment of all God's Promises to his Church, and all the Blessings included in God's Covenant with his True Worshipers. That, at length,
 (3) If. 11. 9. the Earth (3) should be full of the Knowledge of the Lord, as the Waters cover the Sea: That (4) the
 (4) Rev. 11. 15. Kingdoms of this World should become the Kingdoms of the Lord: That, in the (5) last Days, unto the
 Dan. 7. 27. Mountain of the Lords House, the Seat of his True Worship, should all Nations flow. That God
 (5) If. 2. 2. would (6) create New Heavens, and a New Earth,
 (6) If. 65. 17. (7) wherein dwelleth Righteousness: Wherein (8) the People should be All righteous, and inherit the
 (8) If. 60. 21; 65. 25; Land for ever; should be All (9) Holy, even every
 11. 9; 1. one that is (10) written among the Living. That
 26. God would (11) set up a Kingdom, which should
 (9) If. 4. 3. never be destroyed, but stand for ever: And that
 (10) or, (12) the Saints of the Most High should take the
 written unto Life, Kingdom, and possess the Kingdom for ever, even for
 הכתוב לחיים
 So Dan. 12. 1.

7. All the Great Promises therefore, which God has ever made to his CHURCH, to his PEOPLE, to the FAMILIES or NATIONS of his True Worshipers, are evidently to be all along so understood, as that Wicked and Unworthy Persons, of whatever Family or Nation or Profession of Religion they be, shall be excluded from the Benefit of those Promises, shall be cut off from God's People; and Worthy Persons of all Nations, from the East and from the West, and from the North and from the South, shall be accepted in their Stead. That is to say: In like Manner as the Promise was made originally, not to All the Children of Abraham, but to Isaac only; and not to Both the Sons of Isaac, but to Jacob only: And, among the Posterity

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terity of Jacob, All were not Israel, which were Of Israel; but, in Elijab's Days, seven Thousand only were the True Israel; and, in the Time of Isaiah, though the Number of the Children of Israel was as the Sand of the Sea, yet a Remnant only was to be saved; And in Hosea God says, I will call Them my People, which were not my People, and Her beloved, which was not beloved: So 'tis all along evidently to be understood, that the Children of the Promise in the literal Sense according to the Flesh, the Visible Church or Professed Worshippers of the True God, are but the Type or Representative of the Real invisible Church of God, the (1) true Children of Abraham in the spiritual and religious Sense, the (2) Saints of the most High, who shall possess the Kingdom for ever, even for ever and ever, even (3) every one that is Written among the Living.

If. 10. 22.
 Rom. 9.
 27.
 Hof. 2. 23.
 Rom. 9.
 25.
 (1) Rom.
 2. 28. 3.
 7 and 9.
 4. 12.
 (2) Dan.
 7. 18.
 (3) If. 4.
 3.

8. It being evident, that God cannot be the God of the Dead, but of the Living; and that All Promises made to Such Worshippers of the True God as at any Time forsook *All that they had*, and even *Life itself*, for the Sake of That Worship, could be nothing but mere Mockery, if there was No Life to come, and God had no Power to restore them from the Dead: This (I say) being Self-evident, it follows necessarily, that when the Time comes that *The Promised Kingdom* shall take Place, the Dead must be raised; and the Saints, which have died in the intermediate Time, must live again, and (4) stand in their Lot at the End of the Days. When God styles himself (5) *THE God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob*; and said to Abraham, (6) *I am THY exceeding great Reward*; and (7) *I will—be a God unto THEE, and to thy Seed after thee*; and (8) *I will give the Land unto THEE, and to thy Seed after thee*; and repeated the very same Promises to (1) Isaac and to (2) Jacob personally, as well as to (3) their Posterity after them; and yet (4) gave Abraham none Inheritance in

(4) Dan.
 12. 13.
 (5) Exod.
 3. 6, 16.
 (6) Gen.
 15. 1.
 (7) Gen.
 17. 7.
 (8) Gen.
 17. 8, 13.
 15. 17.
 (1) Gen.
 26. 3.
 (2) Gen.
 28. 13.
 (3) Deut.
 1. 8.
 (4) Acts
 the 7. 5.

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the Land, though he promised that he would give it to HIM and to his Seed after him; but Abraham himself

- (5) Heb. 11. 9. *(5) sojourned only in the Land of Promise, as in a strange Country, dwelling in Tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the Heirs with him of the same Promise; who*
- (6) Heb. 11. 13. *all (6) confessed that they were Strangers and Pilgrims on the Earth; and Jacob particularly complained,*
- (7) Gen. 47. 9. *that (7) the Days of the Years of his Pilgrimage had been Few and Evil: And, in blessing Isaac and Ish-*
- (8) Gen. 17. 20. 21. 18. *mael, God promised to (8) make Ishmael fruitful, and to multiply him exceedingly, so that he should beget twelve Princes, and God would make him a great Na-*
- (9) Gen. 16. 10. *tion, and (9) multiply his Seed exceedingly, that it should not be numbered for Multitude; and yet in the very same Sentence, expressly by Way of Opposition, and of high and eminent Distinction, declares that notwith-*
- (10) Gen. 17. 19, 21. *standing all this, yet (10) his COVENANT, his EVERLASTING Covenant, he would establish with Isaac: When all This (I say) is considered, the Inference of the Apostle to the Hebrews cannot but appear unanswerably just, that these Patriarchs*
- (1) Heb. 11. 10. *(1) looked for a City somewhat more than Temporal, even a City which hath Foundations, whose Builder and*
- (2) Heb. 11. 14, 16. *Maker is God; and that (2) they who said Such Things declared plainly that they sought a Country, a better Country, that is, an heavenly; and that for This Reason God was not ashamed to be called THEIR God, because he had prepared for them a City. And if this Inference was necessarily True*
- (3) Heb. 11. 13. *concerning the Patriarchs, who (3) confessed that they were Strangers and Pilgrims on the Earth; much*
- (4) Heb. 11. 35. *more, concerning those who (4) were tortured, not accepting Deliverance, must it needs be true, that the only possible Reason of this their Choice was, that they might obtain a better Resurrection.*

Other Notices in the Old Testament, that the Worshippers of the True God, in every Age of the World, should at the End have their Lot in the Kingdom

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Kingdom promised to the Saints of the most High, are the (5) Translation of Enoch, (6) that he should not see Death; and the (7) Taking up of Elijah into Heaven. Allusions to it at least, if perhaps not direct Assertions, are the Words of (1) Job: (2) I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter Day upon the Earth: And, though after my Skin Worms destroy this Body, yet in my Flesh shall I see God. And those of Isaiah: (3) Thy dead Men shall live; together with my dead Body shall they arise: Awake and sing, ye that dwell in Dust; for thy Dew is as the Dew of Herbs, and the

Earth shall cast out the Dead. And (4) Your Bones shall flourish like an Herb. And that Passage in Hosea: (5) I will ransom them from the Power of the Grave; I will redeem them from Death. O Death, I will be thy Plagues; O Grave, I will be thy Destruction.

And That in Ezekiel: (6) Behold, — the Bones came together, Bone to his Bone; And — the Sinews and the Flesh came up upon them, and the Skin covered them above; — and the Breath came into them, and they lived, and stood up upon their Feet:

— Behold, O my People, I will open your Graves, and cause you to come up out of your Graves, and bring you into the Land of Israel. Again, The Words of Isaiah: (7) The Righteous perisheth, and — is taken away from the Evil to come;

He shall enter into P E A C E: What more natural Signification have they, than that which the Book of Wisdom expresses, ch. 3. 1, 3; The Souls of the Righteous are in the Hand of God; —

They

(5) Gen. 5. 24. (6) Heb. 11. 5. Wisd. 4. 10. Eccus. 44. 16. 49. 14. (7) 2 Kings 2. 11. Eccus 48. 9. 1 Macc. 2. 58. (1) Job 19. 25. (2) The Introduction to these Words is very solemn: *Oh that my Words were now — graven with an Iron Pen, and Lead, in the Rock for ever!* And how they were anciently understood appears from that Addition to the End of the Book of Job in the LXX, γέγραπται δὲ, αὐτὸν πάλιν ἀναστήσεσθαι, μετ' ὧν ὁ πνεῦμα ἀνίστησιν. So Job died, being old, and full of Days: "But 'tis written that he shall rise again with Those whom the Lord raises up."

(3) If. 26. 19.

(4) If. 66,

14.

(5) Hof.

13. 14.

(6) Ezek.

37; 7, 8.

10, 12.

(7) If. 57.

1, 2.

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- They are in Peace? And What, but the Future*
- (1) If. 65. State, can the (1) Conclusion of *Isaiah's Prophecy*
 17. 66. reasonably be referred to? *Behold; I create new Hea-*
 22, 23, 24. *vens and a new Earth:—As the new Heavens and*
the new Earth which I will make, shall remain before
me, saith the Lord; so shall your Seed and your Name
remain. And—all Flesh shall come to worship be-
fore me, saith the Lord. And they shall go forth and
look upon the Carcases of the Men that have transgressed
against me: For their Worm shall not die, neither shall
their Fire be quenched, and they shall be an Abhorring
- (2) Ezek. *unto all Flesh.* In like Manner, *Whom does God*
 44. 15, speak of by *Ezekiel*, when he says, (2) *The Sons*
 16. of (3) *Zadock*, that kept the Charge of my Sanctuary,
 (3) בני צדוק, *The WHEN the Children of Israel went astray from me;*
 Sons of [which (4) *went not astray, when the Children of Israel*
went astray] — they shall enter into my Sanctuary?
 Righteous-
 ness.
- (4) Ezek. And to what do the following Words of the same
 48. 11. Prophet most naturally refer? (1) *Every Thing*
shall live, whither the River co-
meth: — And by the River,
upon the Bank thereof, on this Side
and on that Side, shall grow all
Trees for Meat; whose Leaf shall
not fade, neither shall the Fruit
thereof be consumed: It shall bring
forth new Fruit according to his
Months, because their Waters they
issued out of the Sanctuary; And the Fruit thereof
shall be for Meat, and the Leaf thereof for Medi-
cine. Still more strong is that *Allusion in Daniel:*
- (2) Dan. (2) *I beheld till the Thrones were cast down, [till*
 7. 9, 10. *the Thrones were placed] and the Ancient of Days*
did sit: — A fiery Stream issued and came forth
from before him: Thousand Thousands ministered unto
him, and ten Thousand Times ten Thousand stood
before him: The Judgment was set, and the Books
were opened. But the following Words of the
 same

same Prophet are *direct* and *express*; (3) Many of (3) Dan. 12. 2, 3, them that sleep in the Dust of the Earth shall awake, some to everlasting Life, [every one (4) that shall be found written in the Book] and some to Shame and Everlasting Contempt. And they that be wise shall shine as the Brightness of the Firmament; and they that turn many to Righteousness, as the Stars for ever and ever.—But go thou thy Way, till the End be: For thou shalt rest, and shalt stand in thy Lot at the End of the Days. Can any one, who considers these Texts, with any Truth or Reason affirm, that All the Promises, supposed to be made to the Jews before Christ's Time, were meant of some “*Temporal*” Deliverance only, “*without the least Imagination of a Spiritual Deliverance?*”

9. There are in the Old Testament many *Intimations*, and some *direct Predictions*, that all the Great Promises of God, made to his True Worshipers, shall receive their final Accomplishment by means of a *Particular Person*, anointed of God for That Purpose; who, after the Reduction of all Adversaries, shall set up the Everlasting Kingdom. The Seed of Abraham, in which *All the Nations of the Earth* were to be *Blessed*; (and in like Manner the Seed of the Woman, which was to bruise the Serpent's Head;) might originally, with equal Propriety, and in as reasonable and natural a Sense of the Words, be understood to signify (what St. Paul afterwards (1) asserts it *did* signify) in the *singular* Sense, a *Particular Person*; as, in the *plural* Sense, a *Number* of Persons. The (2) *Skilob* which was to come, and to whom the Gathering of the People was to be; (the Promise laid up in Store, τὰ ἀποκείμενα αὐτῷ, as the LXX render it;) by its *Opposition* in the Text to the Terms *Sceptre* and *Lawgiver*,

(1) Gal. 3. 16. *He saith not, And to Seeds, as of Many; but as of One, And to thy Seed.* That is to say: In the Promise to Abraham the Scripture uses the ambiguous Word, *Seed*, not in the *Plural* Sense, but in the *Singular* Sense.

(2) Gen. 49. 10,

most

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most naturally signifies a *Single Person who was to reign*; and, by the *Gradation* in the Words of the Text, Somewhat of *Superior Dignity* to that of a *Sceptre* and a *Lawgiver*. The Words of *Balaam*:

(2) Num. (2) *I shall see him, but not now; I shall behold him, 24. 17, 19. but not nigh: There shall come a Star out of Jacob, and a Sceptre shall rise out of Israel:—Out of Jacob shall come he that shall have Dominion:* are Words so put in his Mouth, as most properly and obviously to describe a much Greater Person than perhaps He thought of, a much Greater Person than one who should smite the Corners of Moab, and destroy all the Children of Sketh. Again, That the Words of

(3) Deut. Moses; (3) *The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee 18. 15. a Prophet from the Midst of thee, like unto Me, unto Him shall ye hearken;* were not meant barely of *Joshua*, or of “*a Succession of Prophets*,” but of One who should have as eminent a legislative Authority as Moses, may reasonably be gathered from the Occasion of their being spoken, not merely by Moses, upon a general Reliance and Trust that God would provide him a Successor; but by God himself, upon the People’s

(4) Deut. (4) *Desiring in Horeb, — saying, Let me not hear 18. 16, again the Voice of the Lord my God, neither let me see 17, 18, 19. this great Fire any more, that I die not: Then the Lord said, They have well spoken:—I will raise them up a Prophet from among their Brethren, like unto Thee, and will put my Words in his Mouth, and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him: And it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not hearken unto my Words which he shall speak in my Name, I will require it of him.* And that the Words were *Anciently*, long before the Application of them by the Writers of the New Testament, thus understood, and not concerning *Joshua* or a *Succession of Prophets*, appears from those additional Words, at the Conclusion of

(5) Deut. the Book of Deuteronomy: (5) *Joshua the Son of 34. 9, 10. Nun was full of the Spirit of Wisdom; for Moses had*

had laid his Hands upon him.—But there arose not a Prophet since in Israel, like unto Moses, whom the Lord knew Face to Face. The Prediction of *Isaiab* is still clearer: (1) Unto Us a Child is born, (1) *Is.* 9. unto Us a Son is given, and the Government shall 6. 7. be upon his Shoulders; and his Name shall be called

(2) Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace: Of the Increase of his Government and Peace there shall be no End, upon the Throne of David and upon his Kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with Judgment and with

(2) פלא יועץ אל גבור
אבי ער. Wonderful, Counsellor,
[LXX. Μεγάλης βουλῆς ἄγγελος
as *Mal.* 3. 1. ὁ ἄγγελος τῆς δια-
θήκης.] the Mighty, the Potent
one, the Father of the Age to
come. [Vulg. Pater futuri Se-
culi. Compare *Heb.* 2. 5.]

Justice from henceforth, even FOR EVER: The Zeal of the Lord of Hosts will perform this. Again:

(3) There shall come forth a Rod out of the Stem of (3) *Is.* 11. Jesse,——He shall not judge after the Sight of his 1, 3, 6, 9. Eyes, neither reprove after the Hearing of his Ears:

But with Righteousness shall he judge the Poor, and reprove with Equity for the Meek of the Earth; and he shall smite the Earth with the Rod of his Mouth, and with the Breath of his Lips shall he slay the Wicked.

——The Wolf also shall dwell with the Lamb, &c.

——They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my Holy Mountain; For the Earth shall be full of the Knowledge of the Lord, as the Waters cover the Sea. And,

(4) Behold my Servant,——mine Elect, in whom (4) *Is.* 42. my Soul delighteth: I have put my Spirit upon him: 1, 3, 4.

——A bruised Reed shall he not break:——He shall 17. bring forth Judgment unto Truth:——till he have set Judgment in the Earth, and the Isles shall wait for his Law. The Prophet *Jeremiah* no less plainly:

(5) I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and (5) *Jer.* a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute Judg- 23. 5, 6. ment and Justice in the Earth:——And This is his 33. 15, 16.

Name whereby he shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS. And *Ezekiel*:

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Ezek. (1) I will set up one Shepherd over them, and he shall
 34. 23, 25. feed them, even my Servant David;— And I will
 37. 22, 23. make with them a Covenant of Peace, &c.—One
 24, 25.
 Hos. 3. 5. King shall be King to them All;—neither shall they
 defile themselves any more with their Idols;—and
 they all shall have One Shepherd; They shall also walk
 in my Judgments,—and my Servant David shall be
 their Prince F O R E V E R. By Haggai is the

(2) Hagg. 2. 6, 7. Heb.
 12. 26.

(3) The Shiloh, unto whom
 shall the Gathering of the People
 be, Gen. 49. 10.

(4) Zech. 9. 9, 10. Matt.
 21. 5.

same predicted: (2) Yet once, it
 is a little While, and I will shake
 the Heavens and the Earth,—
 And the (3) Desire of all Nations
 shall come. And by Zechary:
 (4) Behold, thy King cometh unto
 thee: He is just, and having Salvation; lowly, and
 riding upon an Ass, and upon a Colt the Fole of an
 Ass:—He shall speak Peace unto the Heathen;
 and his Dominion shall be from Sea even to Sea, and
 from the River even to the Ends of the Earth. And

(5) Mal.
 3. 1.

by Malacki: (5) The L O R D whom ye seek shall
 suddenly come to his Temple, even the Messenger of the
 Covenant. But most expressly of all by Daniel:

(6) Dan. 7. 13, 14.

(7) With Reference to This
 it is, that Christ in the Gos-
 pel perpetually styles himself
 THE Son of Man; and once,
 The Son of Man which is in
 [which in the Prophecy is
 described as coming in the
 Clouds of] Heaven, John 3.
 13. And tells his Disciples,
 that they shall see the Son of
 Man coming in the Clouds of
 Heaven, Matt. 24. 30. And
 the High-Priest, that Hereafter
 ye shall see the Son of Man sitting
 on the right Hand of Power,
 and coming in the Clouds of
 Heaven, Matt. 26. 64.

(8) Dan. 9. 24.

(6) I saw in the Night-visions,
 and behold, one like (7) The Son of
 Man came with the Clouds of Hea-
 ven, and came to the Antient of
 Days, and they brought him near be-
 fore him: And there was given him
 Dominion, and Glory, and a King-
 dom; that all People, Nations, and
 Languages should serve him: His Do-
 minion is an Everlasting Dominion,
 which shall not pass away; and his
 Kingdom that which shall not be de-
 stroyed. And the Anointing of the
 Holy One this Prophet calls (8)
 the Sealing up of the Vision and Pro-
 phecy, and the Finishing of Trans-
 gression,

gression, and the making an End of Sins, and the making Reconciliation for Iniquity, and the bringing in Everlasting Righteousness. (Do all these Things denote nothing but “Temporal” Deliverance, “without the least Imagination of a Spiritual Deliverance?”)

And, in the Words next following, he is styled by Name, *Messiah* : (1) Know therefore, [מָדַע (1) Dan. Know Also] and understand, that from the Going forth of the Commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem, unto the Messiah the Prince, shall be (2) (2) Seven Septena-
Seven Weeks.

Weeks) of Years, (as the Word is used, Gen. 29. 27.) That is to say, Forty-nine Years, the Number of Years appointed until the Jubilee, Levit. 25. 8, 9, 10. Concerning the Other Numbers of Daniel in this Place, I shall have Occasion to speak presently.

10. Concerning this *Messiah*, in the Setting up of whose Kingdom All the Promises of God terminate, 'tis clearly predicted in the Old Testament, that he should arise particularly from the Tribe of Judah, from the Family of David, and in the Town of Bethlehem.

The first of these Particulars is expressed in those emphatical Words of Jacob : (3) Judah, thou art he whom thy Brethren shall praise,——thy Father's Children shall bow down before thee :—— The Scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor a Lawgiver from between his Feet, until Shiloh come, [LXX. ἕως αὐτοῦ ἔλθῃ τὰ ἀποκείμενα αὐτῷ, till the Accomplishment of the Promises which God has laid up in Store for him] and unto him shall the Gathering of the People be. To which the Writer of the Chronicles seems to refer, when he says : (4) The Genealogy is not to be reckoned after the Birth-right : For Judah prevailed above his Brethren, and of him came the chief Ruler, [וְלִנְיָד מִמֶּנּוּ and from Him was it prophesied the Ruler should arise.] And the Psalmist : (5) Judah is my Lawgiver. (3) Gen. 49. 8, 10. (4) 1 Chr. 5. 1, 2. (5) Ps 60. 7. 108. 8.

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- The *second* is expressed in That Promise to Da-
 (1) 2 Sam. *vid*; (1) *Thine House and thy Kingdom shall be esta-*
 7. 16. *blished for ever before thee* [LXX, ἐνώπιόν μου, *be-*
fore Me :] *Thy Throne shall be established for ever.*
 Which Words might indeed, of themselves, be
 understood concerning a *Succession of Kings* in the
 House of *David*. But that God had a further and
 greater Meaning in them, he *very clearly* explains
 (2) If. 11. by the following Prophets. By *Isaiah* : (2) *There*
 1, &c. *shall come forth a Rod out of the Stem of Jesse, and*
Compare a Branch shall grow out of his Roots ; And then fol-
 Rev. 3. 7. *lows, through the whole Chapter, a glorious De-*
 5. 5. 22. *scription of an everlasting Kingdom of Righteous-*
 16. *ness over both Jews and Gentiles.* By *Jeremiah* :
 (3) Jer. (3) *I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and*
 23. 5. *a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judg-*
ment and Justice in the Earth : — *And this is his*
Name, whereby he shall be called, THE LORD
OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS. By *Ezekiel* :
 (4) Ezek. (4) *They shall be my People, and I will be their God* :
 37. 23, *And David my Servant shall be King over them, and*
 24, 25, 26. *they shall all have One Shepherd* : — *and my Ser-*
vant David shall be their Prince FOR EVER :
Moreover I will make a Covenant of Peace with
them, it shall be an Everlasting Covenant. And by
 (5) Hof. *Hosea* : (5) *The Children of Israel shall abide Many*
 3. 4. *Days without a King, and without a Prince, and*
without a Sacrifice : — *Afterward shall the Children*
of Israel return, and seek the Lord their God, and
David their King ; *and shall fear the Lord and his*
Goodness, in the LATTE R Days.

The *third* Particular is expressed in those Words
 (6) Micah of *Micah* : (6) *But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though*
 5. 2. *thou be little among the Thousands of Judah, yet out*
 Matt. 2. 6. *of thee shall He come forth unto me, that is to be*
Ruler in Israel : *Whose Goings forth have been from*
Old, from Everlasting. After the Passages now ci-
 ted out of the foregoing Prophets, what can be
 more

more jejune, than to understand these Words of *Micah* concerning *Zorobabel*, only as having been of an *Ancient Family*?

11. In the Books of the Old Testament 'tis expressly predicted, that the Kingdom of the Messiah should extend, not over the *Jews* only, but also over the *Gentiles*. The (1) Promise made to (1) Gen. *Abraham*, and so often repeated to *Him*, and to 12. 3. 18. *Isaac* and to *Jacob*, that in *Their Seed* should All 18. 22. the Nations of the Earth be blessed, is thus opened 18. 26. 4. and explained by the Prophets. (2) There shall (2) Is. 11. be a Root of *Jesse*, which shall stand for an Ensign 10. of the People; To it shall the *Gentiles* seek, and his Rest shall be glorious. (3) Behold my Servant ——— (3) Is. 42. in whom my Soul delighteth; ——— he shall bring 1. 6. forth Judgment to the *Gentiles*: ——— — I will Matt. 12. 18. ——— give thee for a Covenant of the People, for a Light of the *Gentiles*. (4) It is a light Thing, (4) Is. 49. that thou shouldst be my Servant to raise up the Tribes 6. of *Jacob*, and to restore the Preserved of *Israel*; I will also give thee for a Light to the *Gentiles*, that thou mayest be my Salvation unto the End of the Earth. (5) Also the Sons of the Stranger that join themselves (5) Is. 56. to the Lord——even Them will I bring to my Holy 6, 7, 8. Mountain, and——mine House shall be called an House John 10. 16. of Prayer for All People. The Lord God, which gathereth the Out-casts of *Israel*, saith, Yet will I gather Others to him, besides those that are gathered unto him. (6) The Strangers that sojourn among (6) Ezek. you,——shall have an Inheritance with you among the 47. 22. Tribes of *Israel*. (7) From the Rising of the Sun, (7) Mal. even unto the Going down of the same, my Name shall 1. 11. be great among the *Gentiles*; and in Every Place Incense shall be offered unto my Name, and a pure Offering; For my Name shall be great among the Heathen, saith the Lord of Hosts.

12. Concerning the Same Messiah, of whom so great Things are spoken, and whose Kingdom is to

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be an Everlasting Kingdom; 'tis still expressly predicted by the Prophets, that he should Suffer and be Cut off. Concerning the very same Person, who

- (1) Heb. 4. 9. σαββατισμὸς. (1) Rest to the People of God) is styled (2) *Messiah The Prince*; Concerning the very same Person, I say, 'tis in the very same Sentence expressly predicted that he should (3) be Cut off, but not for himself, [וְלֹא עָלָיו וְעַל הָעָם וְהָעָם לֹא יִהְיֶה וְעַל הָעָם] and the People should not Then be His; unto Him should not (4) Then the Gathering of the People be.] For which Reason, and also because the Words can, with no tolerable Sense, be applied to any Other Person, and because moreover the Connexion of the Whole Prophecy leads to the same Interpretation, the 53d Chapter of *Isaiah*, likewise, is most justly understood to be spoken of the *Messiah*: (5) *There shall come forth a Rod out of the Stem of Jesse*: —
- (6) *With Righteousness shall He judge the Poor*: —
- (7) *Behold My Servant, — mine Elect in whom my Soul delighteth; — he shall not cry, nor lift up, nor cause his Voice to be heard in the Street: A bruised Reed shall he not break, and the smoking Flax shall he not quench; he shall bring forth Judgment unto Truth.*
- (8) *Behold, My Servant shall deal prudently; —*
- (9) *Surely He hath borne our Grievs; — he was wounded for our Transgressions, he was bruised for our Iniquities: — he is brought as a Lamb to the Slaughter, and as a Sheep before her Shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his Mouth: He was taken from Prison and from Judgment, and Who shall declare his Generation? — for the Transgression of my People was he stricken; And he made his Grave with the Wicked, and with the Rich in his Death: — When thou shalt make his Soul an Offering for Sin; — My righteous Servant shall justify Many, for he shall bear their Iniquities; — He was numbered with the*
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the Transgressors, and he bare the Sin of Many, and made Intercession for the Transgressors.

13. All Prophecies of Blessings to the Worshipers of the True God, expressed either as being to happen in the *Latter Days*, or in Words which imply a *Lasting Duration*, are in Reason to be understood as having Reference to the Times of the promised Kingdom of the *Messiah*; of whom 'tis expressly said, that he shall (1) *bring in Everlasting* (1) Dan. 9. 24. *Righteousness*, and that (2) *his Dominion is an Ever-* (2) Dan. 7. 14. *lasting Dominion which shall not pass away, and his Kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.* Some Prophecies of this Kind are *direct* and *express*. Others, beginning with Promises of *particular intermediate* Blessings, and proceeding with *general* Expressions more *great* and *lofty* than can *naturally* be applied to the *Temporal Blessing* immediately spoken of, are most reasonably understood to have a *perpetual View and Regard* to That *Great and General Event*, in which all God's Promises to his true Worshipers do center and terminate; and of which *All intermediate Blessings*, promised by God, are justly looked upon as *Beginnings, Types, Pledges, or Earnests*.

14. For since, from the *express* Prophecies before cited of the *Messiah's everlasting Kingdom of Righteousness*, it appears that God had in *Fact* a *View* to That, as the *Great and General End* of all the Dispensations of Providence towards his true Worshipers from the Beginning; and (3) *no Prophecy of* (3) 2 Pet. 1. 20. *the Scripture is of any Private Interpretation*, (that is, the Meaning of Prophecies is not what perhaps the Prophet himself might imagine in his private Judgment of the State of Things then present) because the Prophecy in old Time came not by the *WILL* of Man, but Holy Men spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost: There may therefore very possibly and very reasonably be supposed to be many Prophecies, which, though they may have a prior and immedi-

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ate Reference to some *nearer Event*, yet by the *Spirit of God* (whom *Those Prophecies*, which are *Express*, shew to have had a *further View*) may have been directed to be uttered in such Words, as may even *more properly* and *more justly* be applied to the *Great Event* which Providence had in View, than to the *intermediate Event* which God designed as only a Pledge or Earnest of the Other. For Instance:

(1) Dan. 7. 9, 10. Suppose these Words of *Daniel*, (1) *I beheld till the Thrones were cast down*, [till the Thrones were placed] and the *Ancient of Days did sit*:— *A fiery Stream issued and came forth from before him; Thousand Thousands ministred unto him, and Ten Thousand Times Ten Thousand stood before him; the Judgment was set, and the Books were opened*: Suppose (I say)

(2) ver. 11. these Words were spoken concerning the (2) *Slaying of a wild Beast*, or the *Destruction of a Temporal Empire*; yet what reasonable Man, who had ever elsewhere met with any Notices of a *Judgment to come*, could doubt but the *Destruction* there spoken of was *therefore* expressed in *Those Words*, that it might be understood to be the Introduction to the *General Judgment*? The *exact* and *very particular* Description of a *Resurrection* in the 37th of *Ezekiel*; supposing it to be *indeed* spoken of a *Temporal Restoration* of the Jews, yet Who can doubt but it was so worded *with Design*, to *allude* to a *real Resurrection of the*

(3) Micah 5. 2. *Dead*? The Words of *Micah*, (3) *Thou, Bethlehem, though thou be little among the Thousands of Judah, yet out of Thee shall He come forth unto me, that is to be Ruler in Israel; whose Goings forth have been from of Old, from Everlasting*; supposing it possible they could be spoken of *Zorobabel*, yet, if afterwards there should arise out of *Bethlehem* One in whom were found all the Other prophetic Characters of the promised *Messiah*, Who could doubt but the

(4) Jer. 51. 7, 6, 5. Words were intended either *solely*, or, at least, *chiefly*, of the *Latter*? The Words of *Jeremy*, (4) *Baby-*

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and Revealed RELIGION.

lon hath been a golden Cup; — the Nations have drunken of her Wine, therefore the Nations are mad: Flee out of the Midst of Babylon, — be not cut off in her Iniquity: — My People, go ye out of the Midst of her, and deliver ye every Man his Soul from the fierce Anger of the Lord: Who, that considers the Nature and Character of the Babylon in Jeremiah's Time, and compares it with the Nature and Character of the Babylon described by St. John, can doubt but the Spirit which influenced Jeremy, foresaw and intended to allude to That Babylon, which had (1) a (1) Rev. golden Cup in her Hand, full of Abominations, (2) and (2) 17. 4. the Inhabiters of the Earth have been made drunk with (2) ver. 2. the Wine of her Fornication, (3) and the Kings of the (3) ch. 18. 3, 4. Earth have committed Fornication with her: —

Come out of her, my People, that ye be not Partakers of her Sins, and that ye receive not of her Plagues? For the Words of Jeremy are more strictly applicable to this latter Babylon, than to That in his own Time.

Again: The Words of Isaiah, (4) Behold, a Virgin (4) If. 7. shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call his Name (4) 14. Immanuel, that is to say, God with us: Supposing (4) Matt. 1. 23.

Isaiah himself could possibly, at That Time, understand them concerning a Son of his own, concerning a Son to be born of a young Woman afterwards, who at the Time then present was a Virgin; and that his being styled Immanuel meant nothing more, than that, before This Child was grown up, Judah should be delivered from the then threatened Incur-sions of Israel and Syria; (all which, notwithstanding the seeming Connexion of the Words in the Place they stand, is very difficult to suppose;) yet if afterwards any Person, comparing the Solemn Intro-duction wherewith the Words are brought in, (Hear ye now, O House of David; Is it a small Thing for you to weary Men, but will ye weary my God also? therefore the Lord himself shall give you a Sign; Be-hold a Virgin shall conceive, &c.) If any one, I say, comparing

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- comparing this Solemn Introduction with the Promises repeated to the House of David, in Other Passages of the Prophets, that there should be born unto them
- (1) If. 9. a Son, who should (1) *sit upon the Throne of David,*
7. Ezek. *and upon his Kingdom for ever, and of the Increase of*
37. 25. *whose Government and Peace there should be no End;*
and considering moreover the Character of this promised Son, that he should (2) *finish Transgression,*
(2) Dan. *and make an End of Sins, and make Reconciliation for*
9. 24. *Iniquity, and bring in everlasting Righteousness:* If a Person, considering and comparing these things, should, in his own Days, find a Son really born of a Virgin, attested to by numerous Miracles, and, by God's Command, named Jesus, (which is synonymous to Immanuel, a Potent Saviour or God with us) because
- (3) Matt. he (3) *should save his People from their Sins, that is,*
1. 21. *should (4) make Reconciliation for Iniquity, and bring*
(4) Dan. *in everlasting Righteousness:* Could such a Person
9. 24. possibly entertain the least Doubt, whether God, who sent Isaiah to repeat the fore-cited Words to the House of David, did not intend thereby to describe, if not wholly and solely, at least chiefly and ultimately, this Latter Saviour? In like Manner:
- (5) 2 Sam. Suppose those great Promises to David, (5) concern-
7. 13, 14, *ing the Establishment of the Throne of his Son for ever,*
16. *were, by David and by the Prophet himself that delivered them, understood (τῇ ἰδίᾳ ἐπιλύσει, as St. Peter speaks) concerning Solomon and a Succession of Kings in his Family; yet, when following Prophecies clearly and expressly declared, that out of the Root of Jesse should arise a Messiah who should reign for ever, no reasonable Man can doubt, but that the former and less clear Prophecy was likewise intended of God, and, therefore, rightly applied by the Apostles of Christ to the same Purpose. To give but One Instance more: Suppose the Words, (6) Thou wilt*
(6) Ps. *not leave my Soul in Hell, neither wilt thou suffer thy*
16. 10. *Holy One to see Corruption, were by David spoken*
concerning

concerning *Himself*, (which however can no Way be proved;) yet Who, that (1) knew *David himself* to be a *Prophet*; and that had compared the Other Prophecies concerning the (2) *Branch out of the Roots of Jesse*, the (3) *One Shepherd* of Israel, even God's (4) *Servant David*, who should be *their Prince for ever*, and yet was to be (5) *Cut off* before he should *reign for ever*; and that had himself seen (as St. Peter did) and actually conversed with *Christ risen from the Dead*; Who (I say) in these Circumstances, could possibly doubt, but that (6) the *Spirit of the Lord which spake by David*, intended the forementioned Words should be understood of, and applied to *Christ*? And the like may be said concerning some Other Prophecies, which are vulgarly supposed to be applied *typically* to Christ.

15. 'Tis not agreeable to Reason, or to the Analogy of Scripture, to suppose that the Jews, before our Saviour's Time, could have a *Clear and Distinct* Understanding of the *Full Meaning* even of the *Express* Prophecies, much less of those which were more *obscure* and *indirect*, when *Both* were intended to be only (1) as it were a *Light shining in a dark Place*.

But thus much is evident, that the Jews, both before and in our Saviour's Time, had, from these Prophecies, (2) a *general* Expectation of a *Messiah*, and that this *Messiah* was to be not merely a "*Temporal*" Deliverer, but אבִי־עַד, *Pater futuri Seculi*, the *Head* of the *future State*, as well as of the *present*. Nor does it at all appear, that our Lord's Disciples, when they (3) *thought* he would have *Redeemed Israel*, or when they (4) *asked* if he would at *This Time* restore again the *Kingdom* to

(1) See above, Page 238, and Prop. VII. §. 4. Page 165.

(2) Percrebuerat Oriente toto vetus & constans Opinio, esse in Fatis, ut Judæa profecti Rerum potirentur. Sueton.

Pluribus Persuasio inerat, antiquis Sacerdotum libris contineri, eo ipso Tempore fore, ut valesceret * Oriens, profectiq; Judæa Rerum potirentur. Tacit.

* Possibly from that Text in Zechary: יִדְּעוּ עַיְנֵי אֲנֹכִי הַיּוֹם דֹּוֹלֵן מִן אֲנָתוֹלָה. LXX.

(3) Luke 24. 21. (4) Acts 1. 6. Israel;

Israel; I say, it does not at all appear that they expected *MERELY* a “*Temporal*” Kingdom; but their Error was in expecting a *Present* Kingdom; and therefore our Lord’s Answer to them is not concerning the *Nature* but the *Time* of the Kingdom. And the modern Jews, at this Day, who to be sure have entertained no *Prejudicate* Notions from the *New Testament Writers* Interpretation or Application of Prophecies, have (I think) still an universal Expectation, that the *Messiah* shall be their Prince in the *future State* as well as in the *present*.

(1) John
10. 25.
(2) John
5. 36.

16. When *Jesus Christ*, by (1) *the Works which he did in his Father’s Name*, and (2) *which his Father gave him to finish*, had Proved himself to be *Sent of God*; (which Truth the *Apostles* likewise confirmed by *Their Testimony*, by their *Works*, and by *laying down their Lives*, not for their *Opinions*, which possibly *Erroneous* and *Enthusiastic Persons* may sometimes sincerely do, but in Attestation to *Facts* of their own Knowledge;) and it appeared moreover, that there was wanting in *Him* no *Circumstance*, no *sine quâ non*, no *Character*, appropriated by any of the *Ancient Prophets* to the *promised Messiah*; He had then a clear Right to apply to himself *All the Prophecies*, which either *directly* spoke of the *Messiah*, or which, through any *intermediate Events*, pointed at him, and were applicable to him.

17. The Application of this *latter Sort* of Prophecies to Christ is not *Allegorical*. ’Tis not an *allegorical* Application, much less an *allegorical* Argument or Reasoning: But they are applied to *Him* as being *really and intentionally*, in the View of Providence, the *End* and *complete Accomplishment* of that, whereof the *intermediate Blessing* was a *Pledge* or *Beginning*.

18. The Application of this *latter Sort* of Prophecies to Christ was never, by *reasonable Men*, urged as being itself a *Proof* that *Jesus* was the true *Messiah*.

Messiah. Nay, the Application of the most *direct* and *express* Prophecies whatsoever has not of itself the Nature of a *direct* or *positive Proof*, but can only be a *sine quâ non*, an Application of certain Marks or Characters, *without which* no Person could be the promised *Messiah*. Many Men were of the Seed of *Abraham*, and of the Tribe of *Juda*, and of the Family of *David*, and born in *Bethlehem of Judea*, and Suffered, and were Cut off; and yet neither Any nor All of these Characters could prove any Man to be the promised *Messiah*: But the Want of any one of them would prove that any Man was not He. The Proof of *Jesus* being the *Christ* were (1) the Works (1) John which his Father gave him to finish. The Applica- 5. 36. tion of *direct* and *express* Prophecies to him is nothing but such a Congruity of Marks or Characters, as removes all Objections by which an Adversary would endeavour to prove that it was not He. Ought not *Christ* (2) to have suffered these Things, and to (2) Luke enter into his Glory? is not Proving from his Suffer- 24. 26. ings, that *Jesus* was the *Christ*, but removing the Objection, by which Some were apt to infer from his Sufferings, that he could not possibly be the *Christ*. The Application of *indirect* Prophecies to him is only a giving of further Light, from the Analogy and Conformity of the Old Testament to the New, by Way of *Illustration* and *Confirmation*, to such as have been before convinced by the *direct Proofs*. The Proof, therefore, of the Truth of Christianity, does not stand upon the Application of Prophecies: But the Works, by which *Christ* proved himself to be sent of God, gave him a Right to apply to himself the Prophecies concerning the *Messiah*; And the Marks or Characters of the promised *Messiah*, given by the Prophets, were so many Tests by which his Claim was to be tried. “Miracles” indeed “can never render a Foundation valid, which is in itself invalid; can never make a false Inference true; can never

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“ never make a Prophecy fulfilled, which is not fulfilled; can never mark out a Messias, or Jesus for the Messias, if Both are not marked out in the Old Testament :” But Miracles can give a Man a just and undeniable Claim to be received as the promised Messiah, if the prophetic Characters of the Messiah be applicable to him. And This it is by which Jesus was proved to be The Christ.

19. From what has been said concerning the Application of *indirect Prophecies*, 'tis easy to observe the Nature and Use of *Types*, and *Figures*, and *Allegorical Manners* of Speaking: That These were much less intended to be ever alledged for *Proofs* of the Truth of a Doctrine; and yet, in their proper Place, may afford very great *Light* and Assistance towards the right Understanding of it. An Instance or two will make this Matter obvious. There is a very remarkable Passage in the Epistle to the Galatians, where the Apostle himself styles the Thing he is speaking of an (1) *Allegory*; that is, he draws an Argument *à simili*. The *Allegory* or *Similitude* he makes Use of is not alledged by him as a “*Proof*” of the Truth of the Doctrine he is asserting, but as a *Proof* of the Falseness and Groundlessness of a particular Objection urged by the Unbelieving Jews against it. The Doctrine the Apostle asserts (both in the Epistle to the Romans and in This to the Galatians) is, that Christians of the Gentiles, who imitate the Faith and Obedience of Abraham, (being circumcised with the Circumcision——of Christ, Col. 2. 11.) are equally capable of being admitted to the Benefit of God's Promises to his People, as the Jews of the literal Circumcision, who were lineally descended from that Patriarch. In Opposition to this the Jews alledged, that since to the Israelites confessedly (2) pertained the Adoption, and the Glory, and the Covenants, and the Giving of the Law, and the Service of God, and the Promises; since Theirs confessedly were the

(1) Gal.
4. 24.

(2) Rom.
9. 4.

the Fathers or Patriarchs, to whom all the Promises of God were originally made; it could not possibly be true, nor consistent with the Promises of God made to their Fathers, that these *Israelites*, who had been all along the *peculiar People* or *Church* of God, should at last be rejected for not receiving the Gospel; and that Believers, from among the *Gentiles* of all Nations, should be received in Their Stead. Now, in Reply to this Objection, the Apostle argues with the greatest *Justness and Strength*, from the *Analogy* of a like Case acknowledged by Themselves, in which the *Reason of the Thing* was the same; even from the *Analogy* of God's Method and Manner of proceeding, in the Giving of Those very Original Promises to the Patriarchs, upon which This Prejudice of the Jews was founded. (1) Tell me, says he, (1) Gal. ye that desire to be under the Law, do ye not hear the Law? That is, Will ye not attend to the *Analogy* of God's Method of proceeding in Those Very Promises on which ye depend? For it is written, that Abraham had Two Sons, the one by a Bond-maid, the other by a Free Woman: But He who was of the Bond-woman, was born after the Flesh; but he of the Free Woman was by Promise: Which Things are an Allegory, &c. That is to say: Even originally, the Promise was not made to All the Children of Abraham, but to Isaac only: Which was, from the Beginning, a very plain Declaration, that God did not principally intend his Promise to take Place in (2) Abraham's Descendents according to the Flesh, but in those (2) Rom. 9. 8. who, by a Faith or Fidelity like His, were, in a truer and higher Sense, the Children and Followers of that Great Father of the Faithful. In like Manner, and for the same Reason, the Promise was not made (3) to Both the Sons of Isaac, but to Jacob only: (3) Rom. And, among the Posterity of Jacob, All (4) were 9. 10. not Israel, which were Of Israel. What ye (5) (4) Rom. yourselves, therefore, saith St. Paul, who are so de- 9. 6. (5) Gal. sirous 4. 21.

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sirous to be under the Mosaic Law, cannot but acknowledge to have been originally and always true; the same is true (1) Now. What was true concerning the two Sons of Abraham, and likewise concerning the two Sons of Isaac, who were the Patriarchs with whom God's Covenant was originally made, is, by Continuance of the same Analogy, true concerning the Covenant established with the Families, and with the Nation of the Jews, descended from those Patriarchs; 'tis true concerning the Church of God, through all successive Ages; 'tis true concerning the (2) Jerusalem which now is, and concerning That which is to come. As (3) Abraham had Two Sons, the one by a Bond-maid, the other by a free Woman: And as (4) the Son of the Bond-maid, though, according to the Flesh, no less truly his Natural Descendent than the Other, yet was not to be Co-Heir with Him who, by the Promise of God, was appointed to inherit: So, says the Apostle, the (5) Jerusalem which Now is, and is in Bondage with her Children; the visible earthly Church, which received the external ceremonial Law from Mount Sinai, is not, by that outward general Denomination, intitled to the eternal Favour of God; But the Jerusalem which is above, which is the Mother of us all, of All, who, by true Faith and sincere Obedience, are pleasing to God; This heavenly Jerusalem, this spiritual-invisible Church or City of the Living God it is, to which all the Promises of God, made in All Ages to his Church, are, in Reality, originally and finally appropriated.

From this remarkable Instance, 'tis well worth observing by the Way, that, when the Apostles are supposed to argue with the Jews *ad Hominem*, the Meaning is, that Arguments, alledged by the Apostles to the Jews in particular, differ from Arguments brought to the Gentiles, in This; not that they were at any Time Arguments drawn from Things acknowledged

ledged by the Jews, and in themselves otherwise inconclusive; but that they were drawn, justly and strongly, from Things well known among the Jews, though what the Gentiles were Strangers to.

The Correspondences of Types and Antitypes, though they are not themselves proper Proofs of the Truth of a Doctrine, yet they may be very reasonable Confirmations of the Foreknowledge of God; of the uniform View of Providence under different Dispensations; of the Analogy, Harmony, and Agreement between the Old Testament and the New. The Words of the Law, concerning one particular Kind of Death, (1) *He that is hanged is accursed of God*, can hardly be conceived to have been put in upon any other Account than with a View and Foresight to the Application made of it by (2) St. Paul. The Analogies between the (3) Paschal Lamb and the Lamb of God slain from the Foundation of the World; between the Egyptian Bondage and the Tyranny of Sin; between the (4) Baptism of the Israelites in the Sea and in the Cloud and the Baptism of Christians; between the (5) Passage through the Wilderness and through the Present World; between (6) Jesus [Joshua] bringing the People into the promised Land and Jesus Christ being the Captain of Salvation to Believers; between the Sabbath of Rest promised to the People of God in the earthly Canaan and the Eternal Rest promised in the Heavenly Canaan; between the (8) Liberty granted from the Time of the Death of the High Priest, to him that had fled into a City of Refuge, and the Redemption purchased by the Death of Christ; between the (9) High Priest entering into the Holy Place every Year with Blood of Others and Christ's (10) once entering with his own Blood into Heaven himself, to appear in the Presence of God for us: These, (I say) and innumerable other Analogies, between the (11) Shadows of Things to come, the (12) Shadows of good Things to come, the (13) Shadows of Heavenly Things,

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(1) Deut. 21. 23.

(2) Gal. 3. 13.

(3) Exod. 12. 22, 46.

Joh. 1. 29.

Rev. 1. 5.

(4) 1 Cor. 10. 1, 2.

(5) Heb. 3. 15-9.

(6) Heb. 4. 1, 2, 3.

(7) Heb. 4. 5, 9, 11.

(8) Num. 35. 25, 28.

(9) Heb. 9. 25.

(10) Heb. 9. 12, 24.

(11) Col. 2. 17.

(12) Heb. 10. 1.

(13) Heb. 8. 5.

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- Heb. 9. 9. Things, the (1) *Figures for the Time then present,*
 (2) Heb. 9. 23. *the (2) Patterns of Things in the Heavens, and (3)*
 (3) Heb. 9. 23. *The Heavenly Things Themselves, cannot, without the*
 Force of strong Prejudice, be conceived to have
 happened by *Mere Chance, without Any Foresight*
or Design. There are no *such Analogies, much less*
such Series of Analogies, found in the Books of
mere enthusiastic Writers, much less of enthusiastic
Writers living in such remote Ages from each other.
 'Tis much more credible and reasonable to sup-
 pose, (what St. Paul affirms) that (4) *these Things*
 (4) 1 Cor. 10. 6. *were Our Examples ; and that, in the uniform Course*
 (5) ver. 11. *of God's Government of the World, (5) all these*
Things happened unto Them of old for Ensamples, and
they are written for Our Admonition, upon whom the
Ends of the World are come. And hence arises that *Apt-*
ness of Similitude in the Application of several Legal
Performances to the Morality of the Gospel, that
it can very hardly be supposed not to have been
 (6) 1 Cor. 5. 6, 7, 8. *originally intended.* As, (6) *Know ye not that a*
little Leaven leaveneth the whole Lump ? Purge out
therefore the Old Leaven, that ye may be a new Lump,
as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our Passover
is sacrificed for us. Therefore let us keep the Feast,
not with old Leaven, neither with the Leaven of
Malice and Wickedness, but with the unleavened
 (7) Phil. 3. 3. *Bread of Sincerity and Truth.* Again ; (7) *WE are*
THE Circumcision, which worship God in the Spirit,
and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no Confidence in
 (8) Col. 2. 13, 11. *the Flesh.* And ; (8) *You being dead in your Sins,*
and in the Circumcision of your Flesh, hath God quick-
ened together with Christ ; — In whom also ye are
circumcised with the Circumcision made without Hands,
in putting off the Body of the Sins of the Flesh, by [the
Christian, the Spiritual Circumcision] the Circumci-
 (9) 1 Cor. 9. 13, 14, 8. 9, 10. 1 Tim. 5. 18. *sion of Christ.* And ; (9) *Do ye not know that they,*
which — wait at the Altar, are Partakers with the
Altar ? Even so hath the Lord ordained, that they,
which

which preach the Gospel, should live of the Gospel.
 — Say I these Things as a Man? or saith not the
 Law the same also? For it is written in the Law of
 Moses, Thou shalt not muzzle the Mouth of the Ox that
 treadeth out the Corn. Doth God take Care for Oxen?
 or saith he it altogether for our Sakes?

Some Applications of Texts out of the Old
 Testament are mere *Allusions*: That is, nothing
 more is intended to be affirmed, than that the Words,
 spoken in the Old Testament, are as Truly and as
 Justly applicable to the present Occasion, as they
 were to That upon which they were originally spo-
 ken. Of this Kind, I think, is That of St. Mat-
 thew: (1) *Then was fulfilled that which was spoken* (1) Matt.
by Jeremiah the Prophet, saying, In Rama was there 2. 17.
a Voice heard, Lamentation and Weeping, and great Jer. 31.
Mourning, Rachel weeping for her Children, and 15.
would not be comforted, because they are not. Thus
 likewise St. Paul: (2) *I mean not that other Men be* (2) 2 Cor.
eased, and you burthened; but by an Equality; As 8. 13, 14,
it is written, He, that had gathered much, had no- 15.
thing over; and he, that had gathered little, had no
Lack. Again; What (3) *Isaiah says of the Jews,* (3) Is. 6.
(supposing he did not speak there prophetically, 9.
though the Solemnity of the Introduction makes it
much more reasonable to believe he did: But sup-
posing he spake of the Jews in his own Time) Go
and tell this People, Hear ye indeed, but understand
not; and see ye indeed, but perceive not: make the
Heart of this People fat, and make their Ears heavy,
and shut their Eyes: lest they see with their Eyes,
and hear with their Ears, and understand with their
Heart, and convert and be healed, was (4) *fulfilled,* (4) Matt.
was verified, was equally true, equally applicable to 13. 14.
the Jews, in our Saviour's Days. Of the same Kind
 seems to be (5) *St. Matthew's Explication of that* (5) Matt.
Passage in (6) *Isaiah, Surely he hath borne our Grievs,* 8. 17.
and carried our Sorrows. The Sense of the Words (6) Is. 53.
 in 4.

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in the Prophecy is what St. Peter expresses :

- (1) 1 Pet. 2. 24. (1) *Who his ownself bare our Sins in his own Body on the Tree : And the Apostle to the Hebrews,*
- (2) Heb. 9. 28. (2) *Christ was once offered to bear the Sins of Many.*
- (3) Matt. 8. 16, 17. Yet St. Matthew says, (3) *He healed all that were Sick, That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the Prophet, saying, Himself took our Infirmities, and bare our Sicknesses ; his Meaning is, Christ healed Diseases in such a Manner, that even in That Sense also the Words of Isaiab were literally*
- (4) Matt. 13. 34, 35. *verified.* To give but One Instance more : (4) *All these Things (saith the Evangelist) spake Jesus unto the Multitude in Parables ——— that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Prophet, saying, I will open my Mouth in Parables, I will utter Things which have been kept secret from the Foundation of the World : That is, the Words (5) of the*
- (5) Ps. 78. 2. *Psalmist were as properly, as truly, and as justly, applicable to the Things which our Lord spoke, as to the Occasion upon which they were originally spoken by the Psalmist.*

To such as are accustomed only to Modern Languages, and understand not the Nature of the Hebrew and Syriac Speech, it may seem very surprising, that in the (6) Two last-mentioned Passages the Citations are introduced with these Words,

(6) Matt. 8. 17. 13. 35. *That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Prophet, saying, &c.* But All, who understand those Languages, well know, that the Phrases answering to these Expressions, *ἵνα πληρωθῇ* *that it might be fulfilled*, mean nothing more than, *Hereby was verified*, or, *So that hereby was verified*, or the like. And they, who understand not the Languages, may yet easily apprehend this, by considering the Nature and Force of some Other Expressions of the like Kind.

- (7) Jer. 27. 15. As, (7) *They prophesy a Lie in my Name, THAT I might drive you out.*
- (8) Matt. 23. 34, 35. (8) *Behold, I send unto you Prophets, ——— THAT upon you may come All the*

the righteous Blood. With (1) Many other Passages (1) E. of the same Nature: Where the Words, "*THAT*" ^{11. 9. 17.} "such a Thing *may be*," do not at all signify the ^{3.} Intention, "*To the End that it May be*;" but merely ^{Num. 32.} the Event, "*So that it Will be.*" In the Case of ^{14.} the most Direct and Express Prophecies of all, the ^{Pf. 51. 4.} Words, "*This was done, THAT it might be ful-* ^{Jer. 7. 18.} ^{Matt. 10.} *filled which was spoken by the Prophet,*" never do, ^{34, 35.} never possibly Can signify literally, that the Thing was done *For that End*, that the Prophecy might be fulfilled; because, *on the Reverse*, the Reason *why* any Thing is *predicted*, always is, because the Thing was (*before That Prediction*) *appointed to be done.* Much more therefore, in the Case of *indirect* Prophecies, the Words, *This was done, THAT it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Prophet*, necessarily and evidently mean This only, that the Thing was *so* done, as that *thereby* or *therein* Was *verified* what the Prophet had spoken.

20. It cannot therefore, with any Sort of Reason or Justice, be inferred from *such Citations* out of the Old Testament as I have now mentioned, that the Apostles either *misunderstood* or *enthusiastically misapplied* the Writings of the Prophets. Nor can Any just Argument be drawn against the Authority of the Books of the Old and New Testament from such Topics as These, *that* the Copies of the Law, in the Times of the idolatrous Kings of Judah and Israel, were well nigh lost; *that* some Texts, cited out of the Old Testament by the Writers of the New, are not Now found in the Old Testament at all; *that* other Texts are read differently, in the Old Testament itself, from the Citations of the same Texts recorded in the New; *and* the like. Which Things have, indeed, given Occasion to *Weak and Ridiculous Writers* to invent certain *senseless Rules or Regulations*, according to which, Men may at any Time *rightly*

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make what *Wrong* Quotations they please. But, in Truth, the Things themselves, I am here speaking of, are nothing but what must of Necessity happen in a long Succession of Ages.

(1) 2 Chr.
34. 14.

When (1) *Hilkiab the Priest* (in the Days of *Josiah*) found in the House of the Lord a Book of the Law of the Lord given by *Moses*, 'tis very probable, indeed, from the Circumstances of the History, that Copies of the Law were then very scarce; and that This found by *Hilkiab* was, to his Surprise, an *authentic* or *original* Copy. But that the Whole should have been, at that Time, a *Forgery* of *Hilkiab*, is evidently impossible; because the very *Being* and *Polity* of the Nation, as well as their *Religion*, was founded upon the Acknowledgment of the *Law* of *Moses*, how much soever idolatrous Kings might, at certain Times, have corrupted that Religion, and caused the Study of the *Law* to have been neglected. And in the very same Book, wherein the Account is given of this particular Fact of *Hilkiab's* finding a Copy [an *authentic* Copy] of the Law, 'tis expressly and at large recorded how, in a foregoing Reign, the King

(2) 2 Chr.
17. 7, 8,
9.

(2) sent to his Princes ——— to teach in the Cities of *Judah*; and with them he sent Levites and Priests; ——— and they taught in *Judah*, and had the Book of the Law of the Lord with them, and went about throughout all the Cities of *Judah*, and taught the People.

That, in Length of Time, some whole Books should have been lost, is nothing Wonderful. There are several Books expressly cited in the Old Testament, of which we have now nothing remaining. That, in the Books which remain, there should

(3) In some few Places there is reasonable Ground for a worse Suspicion. As, for Instance, P. 22. 16. where

sometimes, for Want of (3) *Infallibility* in Transcribers, happen *Omissions*, *Transpositions*, and various Readings, is still less to be wondered

dered at. Nothing, but *perpetual Miracle*, could prevent it. They who have Skill to *compare*, in the *Original*, certain Passages in the Books of *Chronicles* with the *correspondent Places* in the Books of *Kings*; or the 18th *Psalms* with 2 *Sam.* ch. 22, which is a Transcript of the *same Psalm*; or the 14th *Psalms* with the 53d, which are also *one and the same Psalm* transcribed; and much more they, who can *compare* the *Septuagint Translation* with the *Original*, will be able to find *Instances* of these Things, and very often also to see plainly *how* and *whence* they happened; (All which, far from diminishing the Authority of the Books, are *strong Arguments* of their *Antiquity*, and *against* their having been *forged* by *Esdras*, or *any other Hand*.) What Wonder then is it, that among the numerous Texts, cited in the New Testament out of the Old, *one* or *two* should *Now* not be found in our present Copies of the Old Testament? and that *some others* should be read *differently*, in the Old Testament, from the Citations of the *same Texts* recorded in the New? Or how does this at all affect the *Authority* of *Either*, when much the *greatest Part* of the Texts cited *agree perfectly* either in *Words*, or, at least, in *Sense*; and the *Whole Series*, *Harmony*, *Analogy*, *Connexion*, and *Uniformity* of *Both*, compared with the *System* of *Natural* and *Moral Truths*, and with the *History* of the *World*, and the *State* of *Nations*, through a long *Succession* of *Ages* from the *Days* of *Moses* to this *present Time*, shew, that the Books are not the Result of *random* and *enthusiastic Imaginations*, but of long *Foresight* and *Design*? For the *Spirit* of *Enthusiasm* is *very hardly consistent* with *itself* through the Writings of *one single Person*. How then is it *possible*, that for 3000 Years together, and pretend-

the *Sense* most evidently in it *ought* to be read, and the LXX Version shews it *anciently* *was* read, כָּאֵרֶן or כָּוֶן, "they *Pierced* my Hands and my Feet; the Jewish Masters, in all their *correct* Hebrew Editions, have written it, כָּאֵרֶן *as a Lion* my Hands and my Feet." Which has no tolerable *Sense* at all.

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ing too (through all That Time) to an uniform Series of Predictions, it should *HAPPEN* never to have fallen into *Such* a Tract of expected Events, as the *Nature and Truth of Things*, and the *Situation of the Kingdoms of the World*, should have rendered absolutely *IMPOSSIBLE*, and altogether *INCAPABLE* of any farther, much less of any final, Completion?

21. I shall conclude This Head with pointing at some particular extraordinary Prophecies, which deserve to be carefully considered and compared with the Events, whether they could possibly have proceeded from *Chance* or from *Entbusiasm*. Some of them are of such a Nature, as that they can only be judged of by Persons learned in *History*; and These I shall but just mention. Others are obvious to the Consideration of the *whole World*; and with Those I shall finish what I think proper at this Time to offer upon this Subject.

Concerning *Babylon*, "it was

(1) *Prideaux's Connexion*,
Part I. Book II. p. 67. Ed. fol.
(2) *Is.* 13. 17. 21. 2.

" (1) particularly foretold, that it
" (2) should be shut up, and besieged
" by the Medes, Elamites, and

(3) *Jer.* 50. 38. " Armenians: That the River (3) should be dried
51. 36. " up: That the City should be taken in the Time
(4) *Jer.* 51. 39. " (4) of a Feast, while her ——— mighty Men were
57. " drunken; Which accordingly came to pass" when
" *Belsazzar* and all his thousand Princes, who were

(5) *Cyropædia*, lib. 7. " drunk with him at the Feast," were (5) " slain by
" *Cyrus's Soldiers*. ——— Also it was particularly fore-
" told, that God would make the Country of *Babylon*

(6) *Is.* 14. 23. " (6) a Possession for the Bittern, and Pools of Water:
" Which was accordingly fulfilled by the Overflowing
" and Drowning of it, on the breaking down of the
" great Dam in order to take the City." Could

the Correspondence of These Events with the Predictions be the Result of *Chance*? But suppose These Predictions were forged After the Event: Can
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the following ones also have been written *After the Event*? or, with any Reason, be ascribed to *Chance*?

(1) *The Wild Beasts of the Desert* — shall dwell (1) Jer. 50. 39. There, the Owls shall dwell therein: And it shall be

NO MORE inhabited for EVER, neither shall it be dwelt in from Generation to Generation: As God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah, &c. (2) They shall (2) Jer. 51. 26. not take of thee a Stone for a Corner, — but thou shalt be desolate For EVER, saith the Lord: 37. 64.

— Babylon shall become Heaps, a Dwelling-place for Dragons, an Astonishment and an Hissing without an Inhabitant: — It shall sink, and shall not rise from the Evil that I will bring upon her. (3) Babylon, the Glory of Kingdoms, — shall be as when God (3) If. 13. 19, 20, 21. overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah: It shall NEVER be inhabited, neither shall it be dwelt in from Generation to Generation: Neither shall the Arabian pitch Tent there, neither shall the Shepherds make their Fold there: But Wild Beasts of the Desert shall lie there, and their Houses shall be full of doleful Creatures, and Owls shall dwell there.

Concerning Egypt, Was the following Prediction forged after the Event? Or can it, with any Reason, be ascribed to Chance? (4) Egypt — shall be (4) Ezek. 29. 14, 15. a BASE Kingdom: It shall be the BASEST of Kingdoms; neither shall it exalt itself ANY MORE above the Nations: For I will diminish them, that they shall NO MORE RULE over the Nations.

Concerning Tyre, the Prediction is no less remarkable: (5) I will make thee like the Top of a (5) Ezek. 26. 14, 21. Rock: Thou shalt be a Place to spread Nets upon: Thou shalt be built NO MORE: — Thou shalt be NO MORE: (6) The Merchants among (6) Ezek. 27. 36. the People shall hiss at thee; thou shalt be a Terror, and NEVER shalt be any more. (7) All they, that (7) Ezek. 28. 19. know thee among the People, shall be Astonished at thee.

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The Description of the *Extent* of the Dominion of That People, who were to possess *Judæa* in the latter Days : Was it forged *after the Event* ? Or

(1) Dan. 11. 40, 41, 42, 43. *shall come ——— with Horsemen, and with many Ships, and ——— shall overflow and pass over : He*
 (2) Ver. 45. *shall enter also into the Glorious Land, [and (2) shall plant the Tabernacles of his Palace between the Seas in the Glorious Holy Mountain ;] And many Countries shall be overthrown : But These shall Escape out of his Hand, even Edom and Moab, and the Chief of the Children of Ammon. He shall stretch forth his Hand also upon the Countries, and the Land of Egypt shall not escape. But he shall have Power over the Treasures of Gold and of Silver, and over all the precious Things of Egypt ; and the Libyans and Ethiopians [כשׁ] shall be at his Steps.*

(3) The Fame of which was so early spread, that *Ezekiel*, who was contemporary with *Daniel*, plainly alludes to it, when he says of the Prince of Tyre, ch. 28. 3. *thou art wiser than Daniel ; there is no Secret that they can hide from thee.*

(4) Dan. 2. 38 — 44.

(5) Dan. 9. 24.

(6) Weeks, or Septenaries, of Years. Compare Gen. 29. 27. Numb. 14. 34. Ezek. 4. 6.

When *Daniel*, in the (3) Vision of *Nebuchadnezzar's* Image, foretold (4) *Four Great Successive Monarchies* : Was This written after the Event ? Or can the Congruity of his Description with the Things themselves reasonably be ascribed to mere Chance ?

When the Angel says to *Daniel*, (5) *Seventy Weeks* (6) are determined upon thy People, and upon thy Holy City, to finish the Transgression, and to make an End of Sins, and to make Reconciliation for

Iniquity, &c. Was This written after the Event ?

Or can it reasonably be ascribed to Chance, that

(7) Ezra 7. 6, 7, 8. from (7) the Seventh Year of *Artaxerxes* the King, (when *Ezra* went up from *Babylon* — unto *Jerusalem* with a Commission to restore the Government of the Jews) to the Death of *Christ*, [from Ann.

Ann. Nabonass. 290 to Ann. Nabonass. 780] should be precisely 490 [70 Weeks of] Years?

When the Angel tells *Daniel*, that (1) *Three- (1) Dan. score and two Weeks the Street* [of Jerusalem] *shall* 9. 25.

be built again, and the Wall, even in troublous Times, [ובצוק העתים, *but This in Troublous Times, not like those that should be under Messiah the Prince, when he should come to reign*] Was This written after the Event? Or can it reasonably be ascribed to Chance, that from the (2) *Twenty-*

Eighth of Artaxerxes, when the Walls were finished, to the Birth of Christ, [from Ann. Nabonass. 311 to Ann. Nabonass. 745] should be precisely 434 [62 Weeks of] Years?

(2) Τοῖς Ἱεροσολύμοις ἀνα-
κοδομηθῆναι τὸ τεῖχος, ὀγδόῳ καὶ
εἰκοσῷ τῆς Εἰρῆς Βασιλείας ἔ-
τει, μηνὶ ἐνάτῳ τέλει δὲ τῶν
τειχῶν λαβόντων, &c. *Josephus*
Antiquit. Judaic. lib. 11. cap. 5.

When *Daniel* further says, (3) *And he shall (3) Dan. confirm* [or, *Nevertheless he shall confirm*] the Cove- 9. 27.

nant with Many for One Week: Was This written after the Event? Or can it reasonably be ascribed to Chance, that from the *Death of Christ, (Anno Dom. 33)* to the Command given first to *St. Peter* to preach to *Cornelius and the Gentiles, (Anno Dom. 40)* should be exactly Seven [One Week of] Years?

When he still adds: (4) *And in the Midst of (4) Dan. the Week* [והצי השבוע, *And in Half a Week*] *he shall* 9. 27.

cause the Sacrifice and the Oblation to cease, and for the Overspreading of Abominations he shall make it desolate: Was This written after the Event? Or can it with any Reason be ascribed to Chance, that from *Vespasian's* marching into *Judæa* in the Spring *Anno Dom. 67*, to the taking of *Jerusalem* by *Titus* in the Autumn *Anno Dom. 70*, should be [Half a Septenary of Years] *Three Years and a Half*?

When the same *Daniel* foretells a Tyrannical Power, which should wear out the Saints of the
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- (1) Dan. 7. 25. *Most High, and they should be given into his Hand until (1) a Time and Times, and the Dividing of Time: And (2) again, For (3) a Time, Times, and a Half: (Which can no Way be applied to the Short Persecution of Antiochus, because these Prophecies are expressly declared to be (4) for many Days;*
- (2) Dan. 12. 7. *Three Years and a Half, or 1260 Days, is, according to the Analogy of all the fore-mentioned Numbers, 1260 Years.*
- (4) Dan. 8. 26. *concerning (5) what shall befall thy People in the Latter Days, for yet the Vision is for Many Days;*
- (5) ch. 10. 14. *concerning (6) the Time of the End; (7) what shall be in the Last End of the Indignation; con-*
- (6) ch. 8. 17. *cerning those who (8) shall fall by the Sword and by Flame, by Captivity and by Spoil, Many Days;*
- (7) ch. 8. 19. *(9) to try them, even to the Time of the End, be-*
- (8) ch. 11. 33. *cause it is yet for a Time appointed; concerning (10) a*
- (9) ch. 11. 35. *Time of Trouble, such as never was since there was*
- (10) ch. 12. 1. *a Nation; the Time (11) when God shall have ac-*
- (11) ch. 12. 7. *complished to scatter the Power of the Holy People;*
- (12) ch. 12. 9. *(12) the Time of the End, till which the Words are*
- (13) ch. 12. 4. *closed up and sealed; (13) to which the Prophet*
- (14) ch. 12. 13. *is commanded to shut up his Words, and seal the*
- Book, for many shall run to and fro, and Know-*
- ledge shall be increased; even (14) the End, till*
- which Daniel was to rest, and then stand in his Lot*
- at the End of the Days.) When Daniel, I say,*
- foretells such a Tyrannical Power to continue such*
- a determined Period of Time: And St. John pro-*
- (15) Rev. 11. 2. *phesies, that the (15) Gentiles should tread the Holy*
- City under Foot Forty and Two Months; which is*
- exactly the same Period of Time with that of Da-*
- (16) Rev. 11. 3. *niel. And again, that (16) Two Witnesses, clothed*
- in Sackcloth, should prophesy a Thousand two Hundred*
- and threescore Days; which is again exactly the*
- very same Period of Time. And again, that the*
- (17) Rev. 12. 6. *(17) Woman, which fled into the Wilderness from Per-*
- secution, should continue there a Thousand two*
- Hundred and threescore Days. And again, that she*
- should*

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should (1) *fly into the Wilderness for a Time, and* (1) *Rev. Times, and Half a Time*; which is still the very ^{12. 14.} *same Period.* And again, that a *Wild Beast, a Tyrannical Power, (2) to whom it was given to make (2) ch. War with the Saints, and to overcome them, was* ^{13. 7.} (3) *to* † *continue Forty and two Months, (still the very same Period of Time) and to have (4) Power over all Kindreds, and Tongues, and Nations, so that All that dwell upon the Earth should Worship him: Is it credible, or possible, that ignorant and enthusiastical Writers should, by mere Chance, hit upon such Coincidencies of [occult] Numbers? especially since St. John could not possibly take the Numbers from Daniel, if he understood Daniel to mean nothing more than the Short Persecution of Antiochus. And if he did understand Daniel to mean a much Longer and Greater and more Remote Tyranny, which John himself prophesied of as in His Time still future; then the Wonder is still infinitely Greater, that in Those early Times, when there was not the least Footstep in the World of any such Power as St. John distinctly describes, (but which Now is very Conspicuous, as I shall presently observe more particularly) it should ever enter into the Heart of Man to conceive so much as the Possibility of such a Power fitting, not upon the Pavilion of Heathen Persecutors,*

(3) *ch. 13. 5.*

(4) *ch. 13. 7, 8.*

† There has prevailed among Learned Men a very Important Error, as if the 1260 Days (or Years) here spoken of, took their Beginning from the Rise of the Tyranny here described. Whereas, on the contrary, the Words of Daniel are express, that, not from the Time of his Rise, but after his having made War with the Saints, and from the Time of their being given into his Hand, should be a Time and Times, and the Dividing of Time, *ch. 7. 24, 25.* And St. John no less expressly says, that the Time, not of the Two Witnesses Prophecy, (for in Part of That Time they had Great Power) but of their Prophecy in Sackcloth, should be a thousand two hundred and threescore Days, *Rev. 11. 3.* And the persecuted Woman, after her Flight, was to be actually in the Wilderness, (and in her Place there, of Riches and Honour) a thousand two hundred and threescore Days, *ch. 12. 6.* Wherefore also the forty and two Months, (the very same Period) during which Time Power was given unto the Wild Beast to Continue, (in the Original it is *ποιῆσαι*, to do what he pleased,

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pleased, *Rev.* 13. 5.) evidently ought not to be reckoned from his *Rise*, or from the Time when the *ten Kings* (*ch.* 17. 12.) *received Power With him*; but from the Time of his having totally *overcome the Saints*, and of his being *Worshipped by All that dwell upon the Earth*, *ch.* 13. 7, 8.

tors, but *expressly* (*2 Theff.* 2. 4.) in *the Temple*, and upon the *Seat of God himself*.

But *These Prophecies*, which either relate to *Particular Places*, or depend upon the *Computation of Particular Periods of Time*, are (as I said) of such a Nature, as that they cannot be judged of but by *Persons skilled in History*. There

are some *Others* more *General*, running through the *Whole Scripture*, and obvious to the *Consideration of the Whole World*.

For Instance: It was foretold by *Moses*, that, when the Jews forsook the True God, they

(1) Deut. 28. 25. should be (1) *removed into all the Kingdoms of the Earth*; should be (2) *scattered among the Heathen*, (3) *among the Nations*, (4) *among all People from the one End of the Earth even unto the other*; should There be (5) *left Few in Number among the Heathen*, and (6) *pine away in their Iniquity in their Enemies Lands*; and should (7) *become an Astonishment, a Proverb, and a By-word, among all Nations*: and that (8) *among these Nations they should find no Ease, neither should the Sole of their Foot have Rest*; but the Lord should give them a *Trembling Heart, and Failing of Eyes, and Sorrow of Mind*; and (9) *send a Faintness into their Hearts, in the Lands of their Enemies*; so that the *Sound of a shaken Leaf* should chase them. Had any Thing like This, in *Moses's Time*, ever happened to Any Nation? Or was there in Nature any Probability that any such Thing should ever happen to any People? That, when they were conquered by their Enemies, and led into Captivity, they should neither continue in the Place of their Captivity, nor be swallowed up and lost among their Conquerors, but be scattered among all the Nations of the World, and

and hated by all Nations for many Ages, and yet *continue* a People? Or could Any Description of the Jews, written at this Day, possibly be a more exact and lively Picture of the State they have *Now* been in for many Ages, than this Prophetic Description given by *Moses* more than 3000 Years ago?

The very same Thing is in like Manner continually predicted through all the following Prophets, that God would (1) *scatter them among the Hea-* (1) Jer. 9.
then; that he would (2) *cause them to be removed* 16. Ezek.
into all Kingdoms of the Earth; that he would (3) 4. 13.
scatter them into all the Winds, and (4) disperse (2) Jer.
them through the Countries of the Heathen; that he 15. 4. 24.
 would (5) *sift them among all Nations, like as Corn* 9. 29. 18.
is sifted in a Sieve; that (6) *in all the Kingdoms* 34. 17.
of the Earth, whither they should be driven, they (3) Ezek.
 should be a *Reproach and a Proverb, a Taunt and* 5. 10, 12.
a Curse, and an Astonishment, and an Hissing; and (4) Ezek.
 that they should (7) *abide MANY DAYS without* 20. 23.
a King, and without a Prince, and without a Sacri- 22. 15.
fice, and without an Image, and without an Ephod, (5) Amos
and without Teraphim. And here, concerning the 9. 9.
 Predictions of *Ezekiel*, 'tis remarkable in particular, (6) Jer.
 that, they being spoken (8) *in the very Time of* 24. 9. 29.
 the *Babylonian Captivity*, 'tis therefore evident, 18.
 from the *Time* of his Prophefying, as well as from (7) Hof.
 the *Nature and Description of the Thing itself*, that 3. 4.
 he must needs be understood of that Latter (8) See
 "Captivity into all Places," which was to happen (9) Tobit
 after the "Fulfilling the Time of That Age" wherein 14. 5.
 God was first to "bring them again" (out of the *Ba-*
bylonian Captivity) "into the Land where they should
 "build a Temple," but not like to that which after-
 wards (after their Final Return) should "be built
 "for ever with a Glorious Building." The fore-
 cited Prophecies (I say) must of Necessity be un-
 derstood of that *Wide and Long Dispersion*, which
 in

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in the New Testament also is expressly mentioned

(1) Luke by (1) Our Saviour and by (2) St. Paul.

21. 24. 'Tis also, further, both largely and distinctly pre-
(2) Rom: dicted, as well by Moses himself, as by All the fol-
11. 25. lowing Prophets, that, notwithstanding this unex-

(3) Levit. ample Dispersion of God's People, (3) yet, for all
26. 44. that, when they be in the Land of their Enemies,

(4) Deut. God will not destroy them utterly; but, (4) when
30. 1, 2, they shall call to Mind, among all the Nations, whi-
3. 4. ther God has driven them, and shall return unto
the Lord. he will turn their Captivity, and gather
them from all the Nations, — from the outmost

(5) Deut. Parts of Heaven, — (5) even in the LATTER
4. 30. Days: That, (6) though he makes a full End of all

(6) Jer. other Nations, yet will he not make a full End of
30. 11. Them; but (7) a Remnant of them shall be pre-

(7) If. 10. served, and return out of all Countries whither God
21. 22. 6. has driven them: That he (8) will sift the House

13. Jer. of Israel among all Nations, like as Corn is sifted
23. 3. in a Sieve; yet shall not the least Grain fall upon

Ezek. 6. the Earth: That (9) the Lord shall set his Hand
8. 9. again the second Time, to recover the Remnant of his

(9) If. 11. People, — and shall set up an Ensign for the
11 — 16. Nations, and shall assemble the Out-casts of Israel,

27. 13. and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the
Four Corners of the Earth: For

(10) If. 43. 5, 6. Jer. 16. (10) I will bring thy Seed from the
15. 23. 7, 8. 31. 8 — 12. East, saith the Lord, and gather

32. 37, &c. Ezek. 11. 15, thee from the West: I will say to
16, 17. 20. 41. 28. 25. 34. the North, Give up; and to the

12, 13. 36. 24. 37. 21. 39. South, Keep not back; Bring my Sons
27, 28, 29. from far, and my Daughters from the Ends of the

(11) If. 49. Earth: (11) Behold, I will lift up my Hand to the
22. 60. 8, Gentiles, and set up my Standard to the People; and

9, 10. 66. they shall bring thy Sons in their Arms, and thy
20. Daughters shall be carried upon their Shoulders: (12)

(12) If. 54. For a small Moment have I forsaken thee, but with
7. and Great Mercy will I gather thee: In a little Wrath

the whole Chapter. I bid

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I hid my Face from thee for a Moment ; but with Everlasting Kindness will I have Mercy on thee. And that these Prophecies might not be applied to the Return from the 70 Years Captivity in Babylon, (which, moreover, was not a Dispersion into All Nations) they are expressly referred to the LAT-TER Days, not only by (1) Moses, but by (2) (1) Deut. Hosea, who lived long after, (For the Children of Israel shall abide MANY DAYS without a King, and without a Prince, and without a Sacrifice ; AFT-ERWARD they shall return, and seek the Lord their God, and David their King, and shall Fear the Lord and his Goodness in the LATTER DAYS ;) (2) Hof. 4. 30. 3. 4. 5.
And by Ezekiel, who lived in the Captivity itself ; (3) After MANY DAYS [speaking of Those who should oppose the Return of the Israelites] thou shalt be visited ; in the LATTER DAYS thou shalt come into the Land ;——upon the People that are gathered out of the Nations ;——In that Day, when my People of Israel dwelleth safely,——thou shalt come up against them,——it shall be in the LATTER DAYS. These Predictions, therefore, necessarily belong to That Age, when (4) the Times of the Gentiles shall be fulfilled, and (5) the Fulness of the Gentiles be come in. And that, through all the Changes which have happened in the Kingdoms of the Earth from the Days of Moses to the present Time, which is more than 3000 Years, nothing should have happened to prevent the POSSIBILITY of the Accomplishment of these Prophecies ; but, on the contrary, the State of the Jewish and Christian Nations, at this Day, should be such as renders them easily capable, not only of a figurative, but even of a literal Completion, in every Particular, if the Will of God be so : This (I say) is a Miracle, which hath nothing parallel to it in the Phænomena of Nature.

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Another Instance, no less extraordinary, is as

(1) Dan. 7. 23. follows: *Daniel foretells (1) a Kingdom upon the Earth, which shall be divers from All Kingdoms, (2) ver. 7. (2) divers from all that were before it, (3) exceeding dreadful, (4) and shall devour the Whole Earth: (4) ver. 23. That, among the Powers into which this Kingdom (5) ver. 24. shall be divided, there shall arise One Power (5) (6) ver. 8, divers from the rest, who (6) shall subdue unto 20, 24. himself THREE of the First Powers, and he shall (7) ver. 8, have (7) a Mouth speaking very great Things, and 20. a Look more Stout than his Fellows. He shall (8) (8) ver. 21. make War with the Saints, and prevail against them. (9) ver. 25. (9) And he shall speak great Words against the most High, and shall wear out the Saints of the most High, and think to change Times and Laws; and they shall be given into his Hand, for a long Season; (10) ver. 26, 27. even till (10) the Judgment shall sit, and—the Kingdom under the whole Heaven shall be given to (11) Dan. 11. 36, the People of the Saints of the most High. (11) He shall exalt himself and magnify himself above every &c. God, and shall speak marvellous Things against the God of Gods; — Neither shall*

(12) *The God of Gods, as in the foregoing Verse.*

(13) *Forbidding to marry, 1 Tim. 4. 3.*

(14) *Gods-Protectors, as 'tis in the Margin of the Bible; or Saints-Protectors.*

(15) *Changing Times and Laws, ch. 7. 25. setting up New Religions.*

be regard (12) the God of his Fathers, nor (13) the Desire of Women, nor regard any God; for he shall magnify himself above all. And in his Estate shall be honour (14) the God of Forces; and (15) a God whom his Fathers knew not, shall be honour. — Thus shall he do in the most strong Holds with a Strange God, whom he shall acknow-

ledge and increase with Glory; and he shall cause them to rule over many, and shall divide the Land for Gain.

Suppose now all this to be spoken by Daniel of nothing more than the Short Persecution under Antiochus Epiphanes; which, that it cannot be, I

(16) *Page have shewn, (16) above: But, suppose it were, and 274. that*

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that it was all forged *after the Event*: Yet This cannot be the Case of St. Paul and St. John, who describe exactly a *Like Power*, and in *like Words*, speaking of Things to come in the *Latter Days*, of Things still *Future* in *Their Time*, and of which there was *Then* no Footstep, no Appearance in the World. *The Day of Christ*, (saith (1) St. Paul, (1) 2 Ths. 2. 3, &c. shall not come, except there come a *Falling away first*, and that *Man of Sin* be revealed, the *Son of Perdition*; Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he, as God, sitteth (2) in the Temple of God, shewing himself that he is God: — Whose Coming is after the Working of Satan, with all Power, and Signs, and Lying Wonders, and with all Deceivableness of Unrighteousness. Again: (3) [3] 1 Tim. 4. 3, &c. The Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the *Latter Times* Some shall depart from the Faith, giving Heed to seducing Spirits, and (4) Doctrines of Devils; — Forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from Meats, &c. St. John, in like Manner, prophesies of a *Wild Beast* or *Tyrannical Power*, to whom was given (5) Great Authority, and a (5) Rev. 13. 2, 5, Mouth speaking Great Things, and Blasphemies: And 6, 7, 8, 12, he opened his Mouth in Blasphemy against God: 13, 14, 16, And it was given unto him to make War with the 17, Saints, and to overcome them; and Power was given him over all Kindreds and Tongues and Nations: And all that Dwell upon the Earth shall worship him. — And he that exerciseth his Power before him, — doth great Wonders, — and Deceiveth them that dwell on the Earth, by the Means of those Miracles which he had Power to do. — And he causeth — that no Man might buy or sell, save he that had the Mark or the Name of the Beast. And the Kings of the Earth (6) have one Mind, and (6) Rev. 17. 13, 15, shall give their Power and Strength unto the Beast; 17, — even 17,

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— even Peoples, and Multitudes, and Nations and Tongues. — For God hath put in their Hearts [in the Hearts of the Kings] to fulfill his Will, and to agree, and give their Kingdom unto the Beast, until the Words of God shall be fulfilled. The Name of

(1) Rev. the Person, in whose Hands the (1) Reins or
17. 3, 7. Principal Direction of the Exercise of this Power
(2) Rev. is lodged, is (2) Mystery, Babylon the Great, the
17. 5. Mother of Harlots, and Abominations of the Earth:

(3) ver. 2. (3) With whom the Kings of the
(4) Have been led into Ido- Earth (4) have committed Fornication, and the Inhabitants of the
latrous Practices. Earth have been made drunk with

the Wine of her Fornication: And She herself is
(5) Rev. (5) drunken with the Blood of the Saints, and with
17. 6. the Blood of the Martyrs of Jesus: And (6) by her

(7) Sorceries are All Nations deceived: And in Her is found the
(6) Rev. 18. 23, 24. Blood of Prophets, and of Saints, and of All that are slain upon the
(7) *φαρμακεία*, [*σοφοῖς φαρμακείοις*] Methods of making Men
Religious without Virtue. Earth. And This Person, [the

political Person] to whom these Titles and Characters belong, is (8) That Great City, (standing (9)
(8) Rev. upon Seven Mountains) which Reigneth over the Kings
17. 18. of the Earth.
(9) ver. 9.

If in the Days of St. Paul and St. John there was any Footstep of such a Sort of Power as This in the World; Or, if there ever had been any such Power in the World; Or, if there was Then any Appearance of Probability, that could make it enter into the Heart of Man to imagine that there ever could be any such Kind of Power in the World, much less in (9) the Temple or Church of God:
(10) 2Th. And, if there be not Now such a Power actually
2. 4. and conspicuously exercised in the World; And if any Picture of this Power, drawn after the Event, can now describe it more plainly and exactly than it was originally described in the Words of the Prophecy:

phesy : *Then* may it, with some Degree of Plausibleness, be suggested, that the *Prophecies* are nothing more than Enthusiastick Imaginations.

Of the Testimony of our Saviour's Disciples, as an Evidence of the Truth of the Christian Revelation.

Thirdly ; The chief Evidence of the *Facts* on which the Truth and Certainty of the Christian Revelation depends, to *Us who live now at this Distance of Time*, is the *Testimony of our Saviour's Followers* : Which, in all its Circumstances, was the most credible, certain, and convincing Evidence that was ever given to any Matter of Fact in the World.

What Things are requisite to make the Testimony of our Saviour's Disciples a complete Evidence.

To make the Testimony of our Saviour's Followers a sufficient Evidence to Us in This Case, there can be required but these three Things. 1. That it be certain the Apostles could not be imposed upon *Themselves*. 2. That it be certain they neither had, nor could have, any Design to impose upon *Others*. And, 3. That it be certain their Testimony is *truly conveyed down* to us unto this Day. All which Things are, indeed, abundantly certain, and clear enough to satisfy any reasonable and unprejudiced Person.

For 1. That the Apostles could not be imposed upon *Themselves* is evident from what has been already said concerning the *Nature*, and *Number*, and *Publickness* of our Saviour's *Miracles*. They conversed from the beginning with our Saviour himself :

That the Apostles could not be imposed upon themselves.

They *heard* with their Ears, and *saw* with their Eyes : They *looked upon*, and they *handled with their Hands* of the *Word of Life*, as St. *John* expresses it, 1 *John* 1. 1. They saw all the *Prophecies* of the Old Testament precisely *fulfilled* in his *Life* and *Doctrine*, his *Sufferings* and *Death*. They saw him *confirm* what he taught, with such *mighty* and *evident* Miracles, as his bitterest and most malicious Enemies could not but confess to be supernatural, even at the same Time that they obstinately blas-

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phemed the Holy Spirit that worked them. They saw him *alive after his Passion, by many infallible Proofs*; he appearing not only to one or two, but to all the Eleven, several Times, and once to above five hundred together: And this not merely in a transient Manner, but they conversed with him familiarly for no less than forty Days; and, at last, they beheld him ascend visibly into Heaven; and soon after they received the Spirit according to his Promise. These were such sensible *Demonstrations* of his being a Teacher sent from Heaven, and consequently, that his Doctrine was an immediate and express Revelation of the Will of God, that, if the Apostles, even though they had been Men of the *weakest* Judgments and *strongest* Imaginations that can be supposed, could be all and every one of them deceived in all these several Instances, Men can have no Use of their Senses, nor any possible Proof of any Facts whatsoever, nor any Means to distinguish the best attested Truths in the World from Enthusiastick Imaginations.

That the
Apostles
could have
no Design
of imposing
upon
others.

2. 'Tis certain the Apostles neither had nor could have any Design of imposing upon Others. This is evident both from the Nature of the Things they did and suffered, and from the Characters of the Persons themselves. They confirmed what they taught by *Signs and Miracles*: They lived according to the Doctrine they *preached*, though manifestly contrary to all the Interests and Pleasures of this present World; and, which Deceivers can never be supposed to do, they *died* with all imaginable Chearfulness and Joy of Mind, for the Testimony of their Doctrine, and the Confirmation of their Religion. This, I say, is what *Deceivers* can never possibly be supposed to do. For, 'tis very remarkable, the Apostles did not lay down their Lives for their *Opinions*, (which *Enthusiasts* may possibly be supposed to do) but in Attestation to *Facts* of
their

their own Knowledge. They were innocent and plain Men, Men that had no bad *Ends* to serve, nor *Preferment* to hope for in the World. Their Religion itself taught them to expect, not Dominion and Glory, not the Praise of Men, not Riches and Honour, not Power and Ease, not Pleasure nor Profit; but Poverty and Want, Trouble and Vexation, Persecution and Oppression, Imprisonments, Banishments, and Death. These Things are not the Marks and Tokens of Impostors. Besides, The *Success and Event* of their Undertaking; that plain and illiterate Men should be able to preach their Doctrine to many different Nations of different Languages, and prevail also in establishing the Belief of it; that they should all agree exactly in their Testimony, and none of them be prevailed upon, either by Hopes or Fears, to desert their Companions, and discover the Imposture, if there had been any: These Things plainly shew, that their Doctrine was more than Human, and not a Contrivance to impose upon the World. This Argument is excellently urged by *Eusebius*: *Is it a Thing possible to be conceived, saith * he, that Deceivers and unlearned Men, Men that understood no other Language but their Mother-tongue, should ever think of attempting so extravagant a Thing, as to travel over all Nations? and not only so, but that they should be able also to accomplish their Design, and establish their Doctrine in all Parts of the World? Consider, moreover, how remarkable a Thing it is, that they should, in no Respect, disagree one from another in the Account they gave of the Actions of Christ. For if, in all Questions of Fact, and in all Trials at*

* Καὶ κεῖνο δὲ πῶς ἔμελλον ἐκπλήξεως, τὸ πλάνης ἀνδρας καὶ ἰδιώτας, μήτε λαλεῖν μήτε ἀκροῖσθαι πλέον τῆς πατρὸς φωνῆς ἐπισαμένους, μὴ μόνον διανοηθῆναι τολμῆσαι προελθεῖν ἐπὶ τὴν τῶν ἐθνῶν ἀπάντων περίοδον, ἀλλὰ καὶ προελθόντας κατορθῶσαι τὸ ἱππότηδευμα; Σκέψαι δὲ, ὅποιον ἐστὶ, καὶ τὸ μυθῆνα μηδαμῶς διάφωνον ἐξενεγκεῖν περὶ τῶν πράξεων τοῦ Ἰησοῦ λόγον· εἰ γὰρ ἐπὶ πάντων ἀμφιγνοούμενων πραγμάτων, ἐν τε τοῖς κατὰ νόμους δικαστηρίοις, καὶ ἐν ταῖς κοιναῖς ἀμφισβητήσεσι, τῶν μαρτύρων συμφωνία κυροῖ τὸ ἀμφιγνοούμενον· πῶς ἔκκειν ἢ ἀλήθεια καὶ ἐπὶ τῶνδε συσταίη, δώδεκα μὲν ἄντων Ἀποστόλων

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ἑδομνήκοντα δὲ Μαθητῶν,
μυρίου τὲ πλήθους τέτων ἑκτός,
ἀπάντων θαυμαστὴν συμφωνίαν
ἐπιδεδειγμένων, καὶ μαρτυρησάν-
των γε τοῖς ὑπὸ τοῦ Ἰησοῦ πε-
πραγμένοις, οὐκ ἀνιδρωτὶ, διὰ
δὲ βασάνων ὑπομονῆς, καὶ πα-
σης αἰκίας καὶ θανάτου. Euseb.
Demonstrat. Evang. lib. 3.
cap. 2.

Actions of Christ, with the most exact and perfect Agreement among themselves; and not only so, but have endured also all Kinds of Torments, and even Death itself, to confirm their Testimony? Again;

† Κηρύττειν δ' ἀγροίκους ἄν-
δρας εἰς πάντας τὸ τῷ Ἰησοῦ ὄνο-
μα, καὶ τῆς μὲν αὐτῶν τὴν Ρω-
μαίων ἀρχὴν καὶ αὐτὴν τε τὴν
βασιλικωτάτην πόλιν νεύμασθαι
τῆς δὲ τὴν Περσῶν, τῆς δὲ τὴν
Ἀρμενίων, ἑτέρας δὲ τὸ Παρθῶν
ἔθνος, καὶ αὖ πάλιν τὸ Σκυθῶν,
τινας δὲ ἤδη καὶ ἐπ' αὐτὰ τῆς
ἐκκεκμημένης ἑλθεῖν τὰ ἄκρα, ἐπὶ τε
τὴν Ἰνδῶν φθάσαι χώραν, καὶ
ἑτέρας ὑπὲρ τὸν Ὠκεανὸν παρελ-
θεῖν ἐπὶ τὰς καλεμένας Βρετανι-
κὰς νήσους ταῦτα ἐκ ἑτ' ἐγὼ γε
ἠγνοῦμαι καλὰ ἀνδρωπον εἶναι, μή-
τι γε καλὰ εὐτελεῖς καὶ ἰδιώτας,
πολλὰ δὲ καλὰ πλάνης καὶ γόη-
τας. Id. ibid. cap. 7.

* Οὐδεὶς τε αὐτῶν πώποτε τὰ
συμβάντα τοῖς προανηρημένοις τρέ-
σας, ἐξέστη τῆς ἐταιρείας, ἢ δ' ἀν-
τεκλήρυξε τοῖς ἄλλοις, εἰς φῶς
ἀγαγὼν τὰ συνειδημένα. Ἀλλὰ
καὶ ὁ ζῶντα προδόναι τολμήσας
αὐτὸν, αὐτοχειρίᾳ κατ' ἐαυτοῦ
παραχρῆμα τὴν δόλιν ἐπεσπά-
σατο. Id. ibid.

Law, and in all ordinary Disputes, the Agreement of several Witnesses is always accounted sufficient to de- termine satisfactorily the Matter in Question; is it not an abundant Evidence of the Truth in This Case, that Twelve Apostles, and Seventy Disciples, and innumerable other Believers, have borne Witness to the

That illiterate Men, saith † he, should preach the Name of Christ in all Parts of the World; some of them in Rome itself, the imperial City; others in Persia; others in Armenia; others in Parthia; others in Scythia; others in India and the furthest Parts of the World; and others, beyond the Sea, in the British Isles: This I cannot but think to be a Thing far exceeding the Power of Man; much more, the Power of ignorant and unlearned Men; and, still much more, the Power of Cheats and Deceivers.

*And again: No one of them, saith * he, being ever terrified at the Torments and Deaths of others, for- sook his Companions, or ever preach- ed contrary to them, and detected the Forgery. Nay, on the contrary, That One, who did forsake his Ma- ster in his Life-Time, and betray him to his Enemies, being Self-*

condemned, destroyed himself with his own Hands.
And

And much more, to the same Purpose, may be found excellently said by the same Author, in the *Seventh Chapter* of the *Third Book* of his *Demonstratio Evangelica*.

3. 'Tis very certain that the Apostles Testimony, concerning the Works and Doctrine of Christ, is *truly and without Corruption conveyed down to Us*, even unto this Day. For they left this their Testimony in their Writings: Which Writings have been delivered down to us by an uninterrupted Succession through all intermediate Ages. Their Books were all translated very early into several Languages, and dispersed through all Parts of the World; and have most of them been acknowledged to be the genuine Writings of those whose Names they bear, even by the bitterest Enemies of Christianity in all Ages. Passages, containing the most material Doctrines, have been cited out of them by numberless Authors, who lived in every Age from the very Days of the Apostles unto this Time: So that there is no Room or Possibility of any considerable *Corruption*, such as might in any wise diminish our Certainty of the Truth of the Whole. In Sum; There is no Matter of Fact in the World attested, in any History, with so many Circumstances of Credibility, with so many collateral Evidences, and in every Respect attended with so many Marks of Truth, as This concerning the Doctrine and Works of Christ.

And here, by the Way, 'tis to be observed, that the peculiar *Authority*, which we attribute to the Books of *Holy Scripture* contained in the *New Testament*, is founded in this, that they were written or dictated by the *Apostles themselves*. The Apostles were endued with the miraculous Gifts of the Holy Ghost at *Pentecost*: And This not only enabled them to preach the Doctrine of Christ with Power, but also effectually secured them from making

That the Apostles Testimony hath been truly conveyed down to Us.

Of the Authority of the Books of Holy Scripture.

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making any Error, Mistake, or false Representation of it. And the very same Authority that, by this singular Privilege, was added to their *Preaching*, 'tis manifest ought, for the same Reasons, to be equally attributed to their *Writings* also. Now all the Books of the New Testament were either *written* by the Apostles, or, which is the very same Thing, *approved and authorized* by them. Most of the Books were uncontrovertedly written by the *Apostles themselves*; St. Paul having been made one of that Number by a Commission from Heaven, no less visible and sensible than that which was granted to the rest at *Pentecost*. And those Books, which were written by the *Companions* of the Apostles, were either dictated or at least approved and authorized by the Apostles Themselves. Thus *Eusebius* expressly tells us, that St. Peter reviewed and approved the Gospel of St. Mark, and that

** it was this Approbation that authorized it to be received by the Churches. And Irenæus; that † what St. Mark wrote was dictated by St. Peter; and that ‡ the Gospel of St. Luke was only a Transcript of St. Paul's Preaching. And Tertullian in like Manner; that || St. Mark was only St. Peter's Scribe, and St. Luke St. Paul's. And Eusebius; that St. John § also reviewed the Gospels of St. Mark and St. Luke, and confirmed the Truth of them. And, to mention no more, the same Historian tells us, that (besides some smaller Reasons drawn from some mistaken Passages in the Book itself) the chief Reason why the Authority of the Epistle to the Hebrews was questioned*

* Κυρωσαί τε τὴν γραφὴν εἰς ἑνταῦξιν ταῖς ἐκκλησίαις. *Euseb. Histor. l. 2. c. 15.*

† Marcus discipulus & interpretres Petri, quæ a Petro annuntiata erant, edidit. *Iren. lib. 3. c. 1.*

‡ Lucas sectator Pauli, quod ab illo prædicabatur Evangelium in libro condidit. *Id. ibid. Vide & Tertullian. adv. Marcion. lib. 4.*

|| Licet & Marcus quod edidit, Petri adfirmetur, cujus interpretres Marcus: nam & Lucæ Digestum, Paulo adscribere solent. *Tertull. adv. Marcion. lib. 4.*

§ Ἡδὴ δὲ Μάρκου καὶ Λουκᾶ τῶν καὶ αὐτῶν εὐαγγελίων τὴν ἑκδοσὶν πεποιημένων, Ἰωάννην ἀποδέξασθαι μὲν φασὶν, ἀληθεῖαν αὐτοῖς ἐπιμαρτυρήσαντα. *Euseb. Hist. l. 3. c. 24.*

stioned by some was, * *because they thought it not to be written by St. Paul himself.*

* Τινὲς ἠθετήκασι τὴν πρὸς Ἑβραίους πρὸς τῆς Ρωμαίων ἐκκλησίας ὡς μὴ Παυλὸν εἶσαν αὐτὴν ἀντιλέγεσθαι φήσαντες. *Id. lib. 3. c. 3.*

XV. *Lastly; They who will not, by the Arguments and Proofs beforementioned, be convinced of the Truth and Certainty of the Christian Religion, and be persuaded to make it the Rule and Guide of all their Actions, would not be convinced (so far as to influence their Practice, and reform their Lives) by any other Evidence whatsoever; no, not though one should rise on Purpose from the Dead to endeavour to convince them.*

That the Evidence, which God has afforded us of the Truth of our Religion is abundantly sufficient.

From what has been said upon the foregoing Heads, 'tis abundantly evident, that Men are not called upon to believe the Christian Religion without very reasonable and sufficient Proof; much less are they * required to set up *Faith* in Opposition to *Reason*, or to believe any Thing for that very Reason, because it is incredible. On the contrary, God has given us all the Proofs of the Truth of our Religion, that the Nature of the Thing would bear, or that were reasonable either for God to give, or Men to expect. And unless

* "Ἀλλοις δὲ, ὅση δύναμις, ἀποδεικτικῶς δι' ἐρωτησεων καὶ ἀποκρίσεων προσερχόμεθα. Οὐδὲ λέγομεν (τὸ μετὰ χλεύης ὑπὸ τῆς Κέλσου εἰρημενον) ὅτι Πίστευσον, ὃν ἐισηγοῦμαι σοι τοῦτον εἶναι υἱὸν Θεοῦ, καὶ ἢ δεδεμένῳ ἀτιμότατα, ἢ κεκολασμένῳ αἰχισα. — Οὐδὲ φημέν, ταύτη καὶ μᾶλλον πίστευσον. *Orig. advers. Cels. lib. 1.*

God should work upon Men by such Methods as are wholly inconsistent with the Design of Religion, and the Nature of Virtue and Vice; which we are sure he will never 'do: Nothing could have been done more than has been already done, to convince Men of the Truth of Religion, and to persuade them to embrace their own Happiness. And, indeed, no *reasonable* Man can fail of being persuaded by the Evidence we now have. For if, in *other* Cases, we assent to those Things as *certain* and *demonstrated*, which, if our *Faculties of Judg-*

ing

ing and Reasoning do not necessarily deceive us, do, upon the most impartial View, appear clearly and plainly to be true; there is the same Reason why, in *Moral and Religious* Matters, we should look upon those Things likewise to be *certain and demonstrated*, which, upon the exactest and most deliberate Judgment we are capable of making, do appear to us to be as clearly and certainly true, as 'tis certain that our *Faculties* do not *necessarily and unavoidably* deceive us, in all our *Judgments* concerning the *Nature of God*, concerning the *proper Happiness of Man*, and concerning the *Difference of Good and Evil*. And if, in *other* Cases, we always act, without the least Hesitation, upon the Credit of good and sufficient *Testimony*; and look upon that Man as foolish and ridiculous, who sustains great Losses, or lets slip great Opportunities and Advantages in Business, only by distrusting the most credible and well-attested Things in the World; 'tis plain there is the same Reason, why we should do so also in Matters of Religion. So that, unless our Actions be determined by some other Thing than by Reason and right Judgment, the Evidence, which we have of the great Truths of Religion, ought to have the same Effect upon our Lives and Actions, as if they were proved to us by any other Sort of Evidence that could be desired.

That the Cause of Mens Unbelief is not Want of better Evidence to prove the great Truths of Religion.

'Tis true, the Resurrection of Christ, and his other mighty Works, must, after all, be confessed not to be such ocular Demonstrations of the Truth of his Divine Commission to After-Generations, as they were to those Men who *then lived*, and *saw him*, and *conversed with him*. But since the Matters of Fact are as clearly proved to *Us*, as 'tis possible for any Matter of Fact at that Distance of Time to be; since the Evidence of *This* is as great, and greater than of most of those Things on which Men venture the Whole of their secular Affairs, and on which

which they are willing to spend all their Time and Pains : Since (I say) the Case is thus : He that will rather venture all that he can possibly enjoy, or suffer ; he that will run the Hazard of losing Eternal Happiness, and falling into Eternal Misery, rather than believe the *most credible and rational* Thing in the World, merely because he does *not see it with his Eyes* ; 'tis plain that That Man does not disbelieve the Thing because he thinks the *Evidence of it not sufficiently strong*, but because 'tis *contrary to some particular Vice of his*, which makes it his *Interest* that it should not be true ; and, for *that* Reason, he *might* also have disbelieved it, 'tho he had seen it himself. Men may invent what vain Pretences they please, to excuse their Infidelity and their Wickedness : But certainly That Man, who can despise the Authority both of Reason and Scripture in Conjunction ; who can elude the plainest Evidence of Matter of Fact ; who can be deaf to all the Promises and kind Admonitions of the Gospel, and to all the Threatenings and terrible Denunciations of the Wrath of God, made known, in a good Measure, by the Light of Nature, and confirmed by the Addition of exprefs Revelation ; Certainly (I say) That Man must have some *other Reason* for his Unbelief, than the pretended Want of sufficient Evidence. Did Men follow the unprejudiced Judgment of their own Minds, and the impartial Dictates of natural Reason, the least Possibility of obtaining eternal Happiness, or the least Suspicion of falling into endless Misery, would immediately determine them to make it the great Study and Business of their Lives, to obtain the One, and to avoid the Other. If then we see Men act directly contrary to this natural Principle, and almost wholly neglect these Things, not only when there is a fair Appearance and *Probability* of their being true, which the Light of Nature itself affords ;
but

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but also when there is all reasonable Evidence given of their being *Certainly* true, by exprefs Revelation in the Gospel: Is it not very plain, that such Men are governed, not by Reason and the Force of Evidence, but by some *Other* very different *Cause* of their Actions?

But that Wickedness and ungoverned Lusts are the only Causes of obstinate Infidelity.

What *that Cause* is, is very apparent from the Lives and Actions of most of those Persons who pretend Want of Evidence to be the Ground of their Infidelity. Their *Lusts*, their *Appetites*, their *Affections*, are interested: They are Lovers of Vice and Debauchery, and Slaves to Evil Habits and Customs; and therefore they are not willing to discern the Evidence which would compel them to believe That, which yet they cannot believe with any Comfort, so long as they resolve not to part with their beloved Vices. Their Hearts and Affections are habitually fixed upon Things here *below*; and therefore they will not attend to the Force of any Argument that would raise their Affections to Things *above*. They are inflaved to the sensual Pleasures and sinful Enjoyments of *Earth*, and therefore they will not hearken to any reasonable Conviction which would persuade them to relinquish these present Gratifications for the future and more Spiritual Joys of *Heaven*. The Love of this present World has

1 Cor. 2. 14.

* Ἐμοὶ ὑποκεχυμένους ἔχουσι τὰς ὀφθαλμοὺς, καὶ μὴ βλέποντας τὸ φῶς τῆς ἡλίου. Οὕτω καὶ σὺ, ὃ ἀνδρῶπε, ἔχεις ὑποκεχυμένους τὰς ὀφθαλμοὺς τῆς ψυχῆς σου ὑπὸ τῶν ἁμαρτημάτων καὶ τῶν πράξεών σου τῶν πονηρῶν.
Theophil. Antioch. lib. 1.

** blinded* their Eyes, and therefore they *receive not the Things of the Spirit of God*; For they are *Foolishness unto them*; Neither can they know them, because they are *spiritually discerned*. In a Word: The true and only Reason why Men love Darkness rather than Light, is, *because their Deeds are Evil*.

And so long as Men are under the domini-

And This Reason affords a sufficient Account indeed, why Men should be very unwilling to believe the Doctrines of Christianity. If they are resolv-
ed

and Revealed RELIGION.

ed not to reform their Lives, 'tis no Wonder they care not to discern the Evidence of those Truths, which must needs make them very uneasy in the Midst of the Enjoyment of all their sinful Pleasures. In this Case, were the Proofs of the Truth of our Religion much stronger than they are, or than they can be imagined or desired to be; yet still these Men would be in the very same Case, and perpetually want stronger and stronger Evidence. 'Tis true, many Men, who are now conscious and willing to acknowledge, that they act contrary to all the reasonable Evidence and Convictions of Religion, are nevertheless very apt to imagine within themselves, that, if the great Truths of Religion were proved to them by some stronger Evidence, they *should*, by that Means, be worked upon to act otherwise than they do. But if the true Reason why these Men act thus foolishly is not because the *Doctrines of Religion* are not sufficiently Evidenced, but because *They themselves* are, without allowing themselves Time for Consideration, hurried away, by some unruly Passions, to act directly contrary to all Reason and Evidence; 'tis plain (unless God should irresistibly compel them) they might well continue to act as they do, though the Evidence of these Things were really greater than it is. They are willing fondly to imagine, that if they had lived in our Saviour's Time; if they had heard his Preaching, and seen his Miracles; if they had had the Advantage of beholding those mighty Works, which he performed for the Proof of his Divine Commission; as the Jews then had: they should not, like them, have *rejected the Counsel of God against themselves*, but with all Chearfulness have believed his Doctrine, and embraced his Religion. They fancy they should immediately have become Disciples of Christ, and that the Truths which he taught would have had a most powerful Influence
upon

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upon the whole Course of their Lives. And if their Hearts and Affections were not set upon *This World* more than upon *the Next*; if they valued not the *present sinful Enjoyments of Sense* above *the Expectation of the Glory that shall be revealed*; most certainly they would do the same *now*. But, if their Hearts *be* set upon earthly Things, and their Passions *be* stronger than all the Arguments of Reason; if they *do* indeed so love the Pleasures of Sin now, as that they cannot persuade themselves, by all the Motives of Religion, to live like Christians; we need not doubt to affirm, that they might very well have been in the same Case, though they *had* lived in our Saviour's Time. The *Jews* are a notorious and standing Instance, how far Prejudice, Envy, Pride, and Affection, are able to prevail over the strongest Convictions. When our Saviour began to preach, that he was sent from God to instruct them in their Duty, they required a *Sign* of him, and they *would believe him*; but, when he had worked so many Miracles, that *even the World itself could not contain the Books*, if they *should all be written*, they persisted still in their Infidelity. When they saw him hanging upon the Cross, and thought themselves secure of him, they said, *Let him now come down from the Cross, and we will believe him*: But, when he arose out of the Grave, wherein he had lain three Days, which was a much greater and more convincing Miracle, they grew more hardened and obstinate in their Unbelief.

Matt. 27.
42.

Nay, not
even tho'
one should
rise on pur-
pose from
the Dead
to convince
them.

Others there are, who imagine that if, they could but be convinced of the Truth of another World, by the Appearance of one sent directly from that unknown State, they would immediately become new Creatures. But, if God should satisfy their unreasonable Demands by sending one on Purpose from the Dead to convince them, there is little Room to doubt, but, as they hearkened not to *Moses and the*

the Prophets, to Christ and his Apostles; so *neither would they be persuaded by one rising on Purpose from the Dead*. They might indeed be at first surprized and terrified at the Appearance of so unusual and unexpected a Messenger: But, as wicked Men, upon a Bed of Sickness, at the amazing Approach of Death and Eternity, resolve, in the utmost Anguish of Horror and Despair, to amend their Lives and forsake their Sins, but, as soon as the Terror is over, and the Danger of Death past, return to their old Habits of Sin and Folly: So 'tis more than probable it would be in the present Case. Should God send a Messenger from the Dead, to assure Men of the Certainty of a Future State, and the Danger of their present Wickedness; as soon as the Fright was over, and their present terrible Apprehensions ceased, 'tis by no Means impossible or improbable that their old vicious Habits and beloved Sins should again by Degrees prevail over them. Some there are in our present Age who pretend to be convinced of the Being of Spirits, by the powerful Demonstration of their own Senses; and yet we do not observe that their Lives are more remarkably eminent for exemplary Piety than other good Mens, who, being convinced by the rational Evidence of the Gospel, go on in a sober, constant, and regular Exercise of Virtue and Righteousness.

'Tis not therefore for Want of sufficient Evidence that Men disbelieve the great Truths of Religion, *but* plainly for Want of Integrity, and of dealing ingenuously and impartially with themselves, that they suffer not the Arguments of Religion to have that Weight and Influence upon them, which in the Judgment of Right Reason they ought manifestly to have. So long as Men permit their Passions and Appetites to over-rule

That therefore to make Men judge rightly of the Evidence of Religion, it is absolutely necessary, in the first Place, that, their

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Judice, Lust, and Passion, they become impartially willing to embrace all Truth, and to obey all reasonable Obligations, which shall at any Time be made known to them.

their Reason, 'tis impossible they should have due Apprehensions in Matters of Religion, or make any right and true Judgment concerning these Things. Men that are strongly biassed and prejudiced even in *worldly Affairs*, 'tis well known how hard and difficult it is for them to judge according to Reason, and to suffer the Arguments and Evidences of Truth to have their due Weight with them. How much more in *Matters of Religion*, which concern Things future and remote from Sense, must it needs be, that Mens present Interests, Lusts, and Passions, will pervert their Judgment, and blind their Understandings! Wherefore, Men that pretend to be Followers of Right Reason, if they will judge truly of the Reasonableness and Credibility of the Christian Revelation, 'tis absolutely necessary, that, in the first Place, in order to that End, they become impartially willing to embrace whatever shall, upon the Whole, appear to be agreeable to Reason and Truth, and grounded upon good Evidence, without interesting their Lusts and Appetites in the Judgment; and that, before all Things, they resolve to be guided, in all their Actions, by whatever Rule shall at any Time be well proved to them to be the Will of God. And, when they have put themselves into this Temper and Frame of Mind, then let them try if they can any longer

Job. 7. 17. reject the Evidence of the Gospel. If any Man will do his Will, he shall know of the Doctrine whether it be of God. For them that are meek God will guide in Judgment; and such as are gentle, them he will learn his Way.

That Men of such a Disposition would think it their

Indeed, Men, that are of this good Disposition, willing to be governed by Reason, and not prejudiced by Lusts and Vicious Appetites, could not but give their Assent to the Doctrines of Christianity, upon Account of the very intrinsic Excellency and Reasonableness

and Revealed RELIGION.

Reasonableness of the Things themselves, even ^{greater} though the external Evidence of their Certainty ^{Wisdom to} had been much less than it at present is. Nay, ^{be truly} were there hardly any other Evidence at all, than ^{religious,} barely the Excellency, and Reasonableness, and na- ^{even tho'} tural Probability of the great Truths of Religion, ^{the Evi-} together with the Consideration of the vast Impor- ^{dences of} tance of them; yet even, in That Case, it would ^{Religion} be infinitely wisest, and most agreeable to Reason, ^{were much} for Men to live according to the Rules of the ^{less than} Gospel. And though their Faith extended no fur- ^{they are.} ther than only to a Belief of the Possibility of the Truth of the Christian Revelation, yet even This alone ought in all Reason to have Weight enough to determine reasonable Creatures to live *soberly, righteously, and godly.* For, *is it not plainly most rea-*

*sonable, as an * ancient Writer expresses it, if each of the opposite Opinions were equally doubtful and uncertain, yet by all Means to embrace and entertain That which brings some Hope along with it, rather than that which brings none? For on one Side of the Question there is no Danger at all of incurring any Calamity, if that which we believe and expect should at last prove false; But, on the other Side, there is the greatest Hazard in the World, the Loss of eternal Life, if the Opinion, which Unbelievers rely upon, should at last prove an Error.*

And † again: *What say ye, O ye ignorant Men, ye Men of miserable and most deplorable Folly? Can ye forbear fearing within yourselves, that at least those Things may pos-*

* Non purior ratio est, ex duobus incertis & in ambigua expectatione pendentibus, id potius credere, quod aliquas spes ferat, quam quod nullas? In illo enim, periculi nihil est, si, quod dicitur imminere, cassum fiat & vacuum; in hoc, damnum est maximum (id est, salutis amissio) si, cum tempus advenit, aperiatur hoc fuisse mendacium. *Arnob. adv. Gentes, lib. 2.*

† Quid dicitis, o nescii, etiam fletu & miseratione dignissimi? ita non tam extimescitis, ne forte hæc vera sint, quæ sint despectui vobis & præbent materiam risus? nec saltem vobiscum

The EVIDENCE of Natural

in obscuris cogitationibus volvitis, ne, quod hoc die credere obstinata renuitis perversitate, redarguat serum tempus, & irrevocabilis pœnitentia castiget? *Id. ibid.*

* Χρη πάντα ποιεῖν, ὥς ἂν ἀρετῆς καὶ φρονήσεως ἐν τῷ βίῳ μετασχεῖν· καλὸν γὰρ τὸ ἀδύλον, καὶ ἡ ἐλπίς μεγάλη. *Plato in Phæd.*

† Præclarum nescio quid adepti sunt, qui didicerunt se, cum tempus mortis venisset, totos esse perituros. — Quid habet ista res aut lætabile aut gloriosum? *Cic. Tusc. Qu. lib. I.*

‡ Sin mortuus, ut quidam minuti Philosophi censent, nihil sentiam; non vereor ne hunc errorem meum mortui philosophi irrideant. *Cic. de Senect.*

spise and mock at? Have ye not at least some Misgivings of Mind, lest possibly I hat, which ye now perversely and obstinately refuse to believe, ye should at last be convinced of by sad Experience, when it will be too late to repent? Nor is this the Judgment of *Christian* Writers only, but also of the wisest and most considerate *Heathens*. We ought to spare no Pains, saith * *Plato*, to obtain the Habits of Virtue and Wisdom in this present Life; For the Prize is noble, and the Hope is very great. And † *Cicero*: They have gained a great Prize indeed, who have persuaded themselves to believe, that when Death comes, they shall perish utterly: What Comfort is there, What is there to be boasted of, in that Opinion? And again: If, after Death, saith ‡ he, as some little and contemptible Philosophers think, I shall be nothing; yet there is no Danger that, when we are all dead, those Philosophers should laugh at me for my Error.

But this is not Our Case. God has afforded Us, as has been largely and particularly shewn in the foregoing Discourse, many and certain Proofs of the Truth of our Religion; even as certain as any Matter of Fact is capable of having. And we now exhort Men to believe, not what is barely possible, and excellent, and probable, and of the utmost Importance in itself; but what moreover they have all the positive Evidence, and all the Reason in the World, to oblige them to believe.

To conclude: No Man of Reason can pretend *That God* to say, but God *may* require us to *take Notice of* ^{may re-} some Things at our Peril, to *inquire into* them, and ^{quire us to} *consider* them thoroughly. And Pretence of Want ^{take Notice} of greater Evidence will not excuse *Carelessness* or ^{of certain} *unreasonable Prejudices*, when God has vouchsafed ^{things, and} us all That Evidence, which was either Fit for ^{to inquire} Him to grant, or Reasonable for Men to desire; ^{into them} or, indeed, which the Nature of the Thing itself ^{and confi-} *to be proved* was capable of. ^{der them,} ^{at our} ^{Peril,}

F I N I S.



1892



1113

SEVERAL
LETTERS
TO THE
Rev. Dr. CLARKE,
FROM A
GENTLEMAN in *Glocestershire*,
Relating to the
FIRST VOLUME
OF THE
Foregoing SERMONS:
WITH THE
Dr's ANSWERS
THEREUNTO.

The FOURTH EDITION.

LETTERS

TO THE

Rev. Dr. CLARKE

FROM A

GENTLEMAN in Gloucestershire

Relating to the

FIRST VOLUME

OF THE

Forgoing SERMONS:

WITH THE

Dr's ANSWERS

THE REUNTO.

The Fourth Edition.

T H E
First L E T T E R.

Reverend Sir,

“ I Suppose you will wonder at the present
“ Trouble from one who is a perfect Stranger
“ to you, though you are not so to him; but
“ I hope the Occasion will excuse my Bold-
“ ness. I have made it, Sir, my Business, ever
“ since I thought myself capable of such Sort of
“ Reasoning, to prove to myself the *Being* and
“ Attributes of *God*: And, being sensible that 'tis
“ a Matter of the last Consequence, I endeavoured
“ after a *demonstrative* Proof, not only more fully
“ to *satisfy* my *own* Mind, but also in order to
“ *defend* the great Truths of Natural Religion,
“ and those of the Christian Revelation which
“ follow from them, *against all Opposers*: But must
“ own with Concern, that hitherto I have been
“ unsuccessful; and, tho' I have got very probable
“ Arguments, yet I can go but a very little Way
“ with *Demonstration* in the Proof of those Things.
“ When first your Book on those Subjects (which
“ by all, whom I have discoursed with, is so
“ justly esteemed) was recommended to me, I was
“ in great Hopes of having all my Inquiries an-
“ swered: But, since, in some Places, either thro'
“ my not understanding your Meaning, or what
“ else I know not, even *That* has failed me,
“ I almost despair of ever arriving to *such a Satis-*
faction

The First LETTER.

“ *faction* as I aim at, unless by the Method I now
“ use. You can’t but know, Sir, that of *two*
“ different *Expressions* of the *same* Thing, though
“ equally clear to *some* Persons, yet, to *others*, *one*
“ of them is sometimes very obscure, though the
“ *other* be perfectly intelligible. Perhaps this may
“ be my Case here; And could I see those of your
“ Arguments, of which I doubt, differently pro-
“ posed, possibly I might yield a ready Assent to
“ them. This, Sir, I cannot but think a suffi-
“ cient Excuse for the present Trouble; it being
“ such an one as I hope may prevail for an An-
“ swer with one who seems to aim at nothing more
“ than that good Work of instructing others.

* Page 45.
Edit. 4th.
Page 41.
Edit. 6th.

“ In your *Demonstration of the Being and Attri-*
“ *butes of God*, Prop. VI. * [Edit. 2d. p. 69 and 70]
“ you propose to prove the *Infinity* or *Omnipresence*
“ of the Self-Existent Being. The *former* Part of
“ the Proof seems highly probable; but the *latter*
“ Part, which seems to aim at Demonstration, is
“ not to me convincing. The *latter* Part of the
“ Paragraph is, if I mistake not, an *entire Argu-*
“ *ment of itself*, which runs thus:” *To suppose a*
“ *finite Being to be Self-Existent is to say, that ’tis a*
“ *Contradiction for that Being not to exist, the Absence of*
“ *which may yet be conceived without a Contradiction;*
“ *which is the greatest Absurdity in the World.* “ The
“ Sense of these Words [*the Absence of which*] seems
“ plainly to be determined by the *following Sen-*
“ *tence* to mean its Absence from any *particular*
“ Place: Which Sentence is to prove it to be an
“ Absurdity, and is this:” *For, if a Being can,*
“ *without a Contradiction, be absent from one Place, it*
“ *may, without a Contradiction, be absent from another*
“ *Place, and from all Places.* “ Now, supposing this
“ to be a Consequence, all that it proves is that, if
“ a Being can, without a Contradiction, be absent
“ from one Place at *one Time*, it may, without a
“ Contradiction,

The First LETTER.

“ Contradiction, be absent from another Place, and
“ so from all Places, at *different Times*; (for I cannot see, that, if a Being can be absent from *one*
“ Place at *one Time*, therefore it may, without a
“ Contradiction, be absent from *all Places* at the
“ *same Time*, i. e. may *cease to exist*.) Now, if it
“ proves no more than this, I cannot see that it
“ reduces the Supposition to any Absurdity. Suppose I could *demonstrate*, that any particular Man
“ should live a Thousand Years; this Man might,
“ without a Contradiction, be absent from *one*, and
“ from *all Places*, at *different Times*; but it would
“ not from thence follow, that he might be absent
“ from *all Places* at the *same Time*, i. e. that he
“ might *cease to exist*. No; this would be a Contradiction, because I am supposed to have *demonstrated* that he should live a Thousand Years.
“ It would be exactly the same if, instead of a
“ *Thousand Years*, I should say *for ever*; and the
“ Proof seems the same, whether it be applied to
“ a *Self-Existent* or a *Dependent* Being.

“ What else I have to offer is in relation to your
“ Proof that the Self-Existent Being must of Necessity be but One. Which Proof is as follows,
“ in *Prop. VII.* * [Edit. 2d. p. 74.]” To suppose two * Page 48.
“ or more different Natures existing of themselves, necessarily and independent from each other, implies this Edit. 4th.
“ plain Contradiction, that each of them being independent from the other, they may either of them be supposed to exist Alone; so that it will be no Contradiction to imagine the other not to exist, and, consequently, neither of them will be necessarily-existing: Page 44.
“ The Supposition indeed implies, that, since each Edit. 6th.
“ of these Beings is Independent from the other, they
“ may either of them exist Alone, i. e. without any
“ Relation to or Dependence on the other: But
“ Where is the *third* Idea, to connect this Proposition and the following one, viz. so that it will
“ be

The First LETTER.

* Page 16, 17. Edit. 4th & 6th “ *be no Contradiction to imagine the other not to*
“ *Exist?* Were this a Consequence of the former
“ Proposition, I allow it would be *Demonstration*,
“ by the *first Corollary* of *Prop. III.* * [2d Edit.
“ p. 26.] But since these two Propositions [*they*
“ *may either of them be supposed to exist alone*] and
“ [*so that it will be no Contradiction to imagine the*
“ *other not to exist*] are very widely different; since
“ likewise 'tis no immediate Consequence, that be-
“ cause Either may be supposed to exist *independent*
“ from the other, therefore the other may be sup-
“ posed *not to exist at all*; how is what was pro-
“ posed proved? That the Propositions are *diffe-*
“ *rent*, I think is plain; and whether there be an
“ *immediate Connexion*, every body that reads your
“ Book, must judge for themselves. I must say,
“ for my own Part, the Absurdity does not appear
“ at first Sight, any more than the Absurdity of
“ saying that the Angles below the Base in an
“ Isosceles Triangle are unequal; which though it
“ is absolutely false, yet I suppose no one will lay
“ down the contrary for an *Axiom*; because, tho'
“ it is true, yet there is Need of a Proof to make
“ it appear so.

“ Perhaps it may be answered, that I have not
“ rightly explained the Words, *to exist alone*; And
“ that they do not mean only, *to exist independent*
“ *from the other*; but that *existing Alone* means
“ that *nothing exists with it*. Whether this or the
“ other was meant I cannot determine: But which-
“ ever it was, what I have said will hold. For if
“ this *last* be the Sense of those Words, [*They*
“ *either of them may be supposed to exist alone*] it
“ indeed implies that it will be no Contradiction
“ to suppose the *other not to exist*: But then I ask,
“ how come these two Propositions to be *connect-*
“ *ed*; that to suppose *two different Natures exist-*
“ *ing of themselves necessarily and independent from*
“ each

The First LETTER.

“ each other implies, that *each* of them may be
“ supposed to *exist Alone* in *This* Sense? Which is
“ exactly the same as I said before, only applied
“ to different Sentences. So that if *Existing Alone*
“ be understood as I *first* took it, I allow it is im-
“ plied in the *Supposition*, but cannot see that the
“ *Consequence* is, that it will be no Contradiction to
“ suppose the other not to exist. But, if the Words
“ *Existing Alone* are meant in the *latter* Sense, I
“ grant, that if either of them may be *supposed* thus
“ to *Exist Alone*, it will be no Contradiction to
“ *suppose* the other not to exist: But then I cannot
“ see, that to suppose *two different Natures existing,*
“ *of themselves, necessarily and independently from each*
“ *other*, implies that *either* of them may be sup-
“ posed to *exist Alone* in *This* Sense of the Words;
“ but only, that *either* of them may be supposed
“ to exist *without* having any *Relation* to the *other*,
“ and that there will be *no Need of the Existence of*
“ *the One in order to the Existence of the other*. But
“ though upon this Account, were there no other
“ Principle of its Existence, it might cease to exist;
“ yet, on the Account of the Necessity of its own
“ Nature, which is quite distinct from the other,
“ 'tis an absolute Absurdity to suppose it *not to exist*.
“ Thus, Sir, I have proposed my Doubts, with
“ the Reasons of them. In which if I have wrested
“ your Words to another Sense than you designed
“ them, or in any Respect argued unfairly, I assure
“ you it was without Design. So I hope you will
“ impute it to Mistake. And, if it will not be
“ too great a Trouble, let me once more beg the
“ Favour of a Line from you, by which you will
“ lay me under a *particular* Obligation to be, what
“ with the rest of the World, I now am,

Reverend Sir,

Your much Obliged Servant, &c.”

Nov. 4, 1713.

T H E

THE
ANSWER
TO THE
First LETTER.

S I R,

D I D Men who publish controversial Papers accustom themselves to write with that Candour and Ingenuity, with which you propose your Difficulties, I am persuaded almost all Disputes might be very amicably terminated, either by Mens coming at last to agree in Opinion, or at least finding Reason to suffer each other friendly to differ.

Your *Two Objections* are very Ingenious, and urged with great Strength and Acuteness: Yet I am not without Hopes of being able to give you *Satisfaction* in *Both* of them. To your *First*, therefore, I answer: Whatever may, without a Contradiction, be absent from any one Place at *any one Time*, may also, without a Contradiction, be absent from *all Places* at *all Times*. For whatever is *absolutely necessary* at all, is absolutely necessary in *every Part of Space*, and in *every Point of Duration*. Whatever can at any Time be conceived *possible to be absent* from *any One Part of Space*, may for the same Reason [*viz.* the implying no Contradiction in

The ANSWER to the First LETTER.

in the Nature of Things] be conceived *possible to be absent from every other Part of Space at the same Time*, either by *ceasing to be*, or by supposing it *never to have begun to be*. Your Instance about *demonstrating* a Man to live 1000 Years is what (I think) led you *into the Mistake*; and is a good Instance to lead you *out of it* again. You may *Suppose* a Man *shall* live 1000 Years, or God may *re-veal* and *promise* he *shall* live 1000 Years; And upon *That Supposition*, it shall not be *possible* for the Man to be absent from all *Places* in any Part of that Time. Very true: *But why shall it not be possible?* Only because 'tis contrary to the *Supposition*, or to the *Promise of God*; but not contrary to the *absolute Nature of Things*; which would be the Case if the *Man* existed *necessarily*, as every Part of *Space* does. In *Supposing* you could *Demonstrate* a Man should live 1000 Years, or one Year, you make an *impossible and contradictory* Supposition. For, though you may know *certainly*, (by Revelation suppose) that he *will* live so long, yet this is only the *Certainty of a Thing True in Fact*, not *in itself necessary*: And *Demonstration* is applicable to nothing but what is *necessary in itself*, necessary in all *Places* and at all *Times* equally.

To your *second Difficulty* I answer: What exists *necessarily*, not only *must* so exist *Alone*, as to be *independent* of any Thing else; but (being *Self-sufficient*) may also so exist *Alone*, as that every Thing else may *possibly* (or *without any Contradiction* in the *Nature of Things*) be supposed *not to exist at all*: And, consequently, (since That which may *possibly* be supposed *not to exist at all*, is not *necessarily* existent) *No other Thing can be necessarily-existent*. Whatever is *necessarily-existing*, there is *Need of its Existence in order to the Supposal of the Existence of any other Thing*; so that nothing can *possibly be supposed to exist*, without *presupposing* and including *antecedently*

The ANSWER to the First LETTER.

antecedently the Existence of *that which is necessary*. For Instance: The Supposal of the Existence of *any Thing whatever* includes necessarily a *Presupposition* of the Existence of *Space and Time*; and if any Thing could exist *without Space or Time*, it would follow, that *Space and Time* were not *necessarily-existing*. Therefore, the Supposing any Thing *possibly to exist Alone*, so as not necessarily to include the *Presupposal* of some other Thing, proves demonstrably, that *That other Thing* is not *necessarily-existing*; because *whatever has Necessity of Existence* cannot possibly, in any Conception whatsoever, be supposed *Away*. There cannot possibly be any Notion of the *Existence of any Thing*, there cannot possibly be any Notion of *Existence at all*, but what shall necessarily *preinclude* the Notion of *That which has necessary Existence*. And, consequently, the *Two Propositions*, which you judged *independent*, are really *necessarily connected*. These Sorts of Things are indeed very difficult to *express*, and not easy to be *conceived* but by very *Attentive Minds*: But, to such as *can and will* attend, nothing (I think) is more demonstrably convictive.

If any Thing still sticks with you in This, or any other Part of my Books, I shall be very willing to be informed of it, who am,

S I R, Your assured Friend,

Nov. 10,

1713.

and Servant, S. C.

P. S. Many Readers, I observe, have misunderstood my *Second General Proposition*, as if the Words [*Some One unchangeable and independent Being*] meant [*One Only — Being.*] Whereas the true Meaning, and all that the Argument there requires, is [*Some One at least.*] That there can be but One is the Thing proved *afterwards* in the *Seventh Proposition*.

T H E

T H E

Second L E T T E R.

Reverend Sir,

“ I Have often thought that the *chief* Occasions
“ of Mens differing so much in their Opinions,
“ were, either their not understanding each other,
“ or else, that, instead of ingenuously searching
“ after *Truth*, they have made it their Business to
“ find out Arguments for the Proof of what they
“ have once asserted. However, 'tis certain there
“ may be *other* Reasons for Persons not agreeing
“ in their Opinions: And, where it is so, I can't
“ but think with you, that they will find Reason
“ to suffer each other to *differ* friendly, every Man
“ having a Way of Thinking, in some Respects,
“ peculiarly his own.

“ I am sorry I must tell you, your Answers to
“ my Objections are not satisfactory. The *Reasons*
“ why I think them not so are as follow:

“ You say,” *whatever is absolutely necessary at*
all, is absolutely necessary in every Part of Space, and
in every Point of Duration. “ Were this evident,
“ it would *certainly* prove what you bring it for,”
viz. that whatever may, without a Contradiction, be
absent from one Place at one Time, may also be ab-
sent from all Places at all Times. “ But I do not
“ conceive, that the Idea of Ubiquity is contained
“ in the Idea of Self-Existence, or *directly* follows
“ from it, any otherwise than as whatever exists,
“ must exist *somewhere*. You add,” *Whatever*

G g

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The Second LETTER.

can at any Time be conceived possibly to be absent from any one Part of Space, may for the same Reason [viz. the implying no Contradiction in the Nature of Things] be conceived possibly to be absent from every other Part of Space at the same Time, “ Now I cannot see, “ that I can make these two Suppositions for the “ same Reason, or upon the same Account. The “ Reason why I conceive this Being may be absent “ from one Place is because it doth not contradict “ the former Proof [drawn from the Nature of “ Things] in which I proved only that it must “ necessarily exist. But the other Supposition, viz. “ that I can conceive it possible to be absent from “ Every Part of Space at one and the same Time, “ directly contradicts the Proof that it must exist “ SOMEWHERE, and so is an exprefs Con- “ tradiction. Unless it be said, that as, when we “ have proved the three Angles of a Triangle “ equal to two right Ones, That Relation of the “ Equality of its Angles to two right Ones will “ be where-ever a Triangle exists; so, when we “ have proved the necessary Existence of a Being, “ this Being must exist every-where. But there is “ a great Difference between these two Things: “ The one being the Proof of a certain Relation, “ upon Supposition of such a Being’s Existence with “ such particular Properties; and consequently, “ where ever this Being and these Properties exist, “ this Relation must exist too: But, from the “ Proof of the necessary Existence of a Being, ’tis “ no evident Consequence that it exists every-where. “ My using the Word Demonstration, instead of “ Proof which leaves no room for Doubt, was through “ Negligence, for I never heard of strict Demon- “ stration of Matter of Fact.

“ In your Answer to my Second Difficulty, you “ say,” whatsoever is necessarily-existing, there is Need of its Existence, in order to the Supposal of the
Existence

The Second LETTER.

Existence of any other Thing. “ All the Consequences
“ you draw from this Proposition I see proved
“ demonstrably; and consequently, that the *two*
“ Propositions I thought independent, are closely
“ connected. But *how*, or *upon what Account*,
“ is there *Need* of the Existence of whatever is
“ necessarily-existing, *in order* to the Existence of
“ any other Thing? Is it *as there is Need of Space*
“ *and Duration*, in order to the Existence of any
“ Thing; or *is it needful only as the Cause* of the
“ Existence of all other Things? If the *former* be
“ said, as your Instance seems to intimate: I an-
“ swer, *Space and Duration* are very *abstruse* in
“ their Natures, and, I think, can’t properly be
“ called *Things*, but are consider’d rather as *Affec-*
“ *tions which belong, and in the Order of our Thoughts*
“ *are antecedently necessary, to the Existence of all*
“ *Things.* And I can no more conceive how a
“ *necessarily-existent Being* can, on the *same Account*,
“ or *in the same Manner as Space and Duration* are,
“ be needful in order to the Existence of any other
“ Being, than I can conceive *Extension* attributed
“ to a *Thought*: *That Idea* no more belonging to a
“ *Thing existing*, than *Extension* belongs to *Thought*.
“ But if the *latter* be said, that there is *Need* of
“ the Existence of whatever is a necessary Being,
“ *in order* to the Existence of any other Thing,
“ *only as this Necessary Being must be the Cause of*
“ *the Existence of all other Things*: I think this is
“ plainly begging the Question; For it *supposes*
“ that there is *no Other Being* exists, but *what is*
“ *Casual*, and so not necessary. And on *what Other*
“ *Account*, or *in what Other Manner* than one of
“ these two, there can be *Need of the Existence* of
“ a necessary Being *in order* to the Existence of any
“ Thing else, I cannot conceive.

“ Thus, Sir, you see I entirely agree with you
“ in all the Consequences you have drawn from your

The Second LETTER.

“ *Suppositions*, but cannot see the *Truth of the Sup-*
“ *positions themselves.*

“ I have aimed at nothing in my Style, but only
“ to be *intelligible*; being sensible that 'tis very
“ difficult (as you observe) to express one's self on
“ these Sorts of Subjects, especially for one who is
“ altogether unaccustomed to write upon them.

“ I have nothing at present more to add, but
“ my sincerest Thanks for your Trouble in an-
“ swering my Letter, and for your professed Rea-
“ diness to be acquainted with any other Difficulty
“ that I may meet with in any of your Writings.
“ I am willing to interpret this, as somewhat like
“ a Promise of an Answer to what I have now
“ written, if there be any Thing in it which
“ deserves one.”

I am,

Reverend S I R,

Your most obliged humble Servant.

Nov. 23,

1713.



T H E
A N S W E R

T O T H E
Second L E T T E R.

S I R,

IT seems to *Me*, that the Reason why you do not apprehend *Ubiquity* to be necessarily connected with *Self-Existence*, is, because, in the Order of your Ideas, you *first* conceive a *Being* (a *Finite Being*, suppose;) and then conceive *Self-Existence* to be a *Property* of *That Being*, as the *Angles* are *Properties* of a *Triangle*, when a *Triangle* exists: Whereas, on the contrary, *Necessity of Existence* not being a * *Property Consequent upon* the Supposition of the Thing's existing, but *Antecedently* the Cause or Ground of that Existence; 'tis evident this *Necessity*, being not *limited* to any Antecedent Subject, as *Angles* are to a *Triangle*; but being itself *Original*, *Absolute*, and (in Order of Nature) *antecedent to all Existence*; cannot but be *every-where*, for the same Reason that it is *any where*. By applying this Reasoning to the Instance of *Space*, you will find, that by Consequence it belongs truly to *That Substance*, whereof *Space* is a † *Property*, as *Duration* also is. What you say about a *Necessary Being* existing *somewhere* supposes it to be

* See the Conclusion of the Answer to the seventh Letter.

† or Mode of Existence.

The ANSWER to the Second LETTER.

Finite; and being *Finite*, supposes some Cause which *determined* that such a *certain Quantity* of That Being should exist, neither more nor less: And *That Cause* must either be a *Voluntary Cause*, or else *such a necessary Cause*, the *Quantity* of whose Power must be *determined* and *limited* by some *Other Cause*. But in *original absolute Necessity*, antecedent (in Order of Nature) to the Existence of any Thing, nothing of all This can have Place, but the Necessity is *necessarily every-where* alike.

Concerning the *Second Difficulty*, I answer, *That which exists necessarily, is needful to the Existence of any other Thing*; Not considered now as a *Cause*, (for That indeed is begging the Question) but as a *sine quâ non*, in the Sense as *Space* is necessary to every Thing, and nothing can possibly be conceived to exist, without thereby presupposing *Space*: Which therefore I apprehend to be a *Property* or *Mode* of the Self-existent Substance; and that, by being evidently necessary *itself*, it proves that the *Substance*, of which it is a Property, must also be *necessary*; *Necessary* both in *itself*, and needful to the Existence of *any Thing else* whatsoever. Extension indeed does not belong to *Thought*, because *Thought* is not a Being; But there is *Need* of Extension to the Existence of every *Being*, to a Being which has or has not *Thought*, or any other *Quality* whatsoever.

I am, Sir,

Your real Friend and Servant.

London, Nov.

28, 1713.

T H E

T H E

Third LETTER.

Reverend Sir,

“ I Don't very well understand your Meaning,
“ when you say that you think, *in the Order*
“ *of my Ideas I first conceive a Being (finite sup-*
“ *pose) to exist, and then conceive Self-Existence to*
“ *be a Property of that Being.* If you mean that
“ I first suppose a finite Being to exist I know not
“ why, affirming Necessity of Existence to be only
“ a Consequent of its Existence; and that, when
“ I have supposed it *Finite*, I very safely conclude
“ it is *not Infinite*; I am utterly at a Loss upon
“ what Expressions in my Letter this Conjecture
“ can be founded. But if you mean, that I first
“ of all prove a Being to *Exist from Eternity*, and
“ then, from the Reasons of Things, prove that
“ such a Being must be eternally *Necessary*; I
“ freely own it: Neither do I conceive it to be
“ irregular or absurd; for there is a great Dif-
“ ference between the Order in which *Things exist*,
“ and the Order in which I *prove* to myself that
“ *they exist*. Neither do I think my saying a ne-
“ cessary Being exists *Somewhere* supposes it to
“ be *finite*; it only supposes that this Being exists
“ *in Space*, without determining whether *here*, or
“ *there*, or *every-where*.

“ To my second Objection you say, *That which*
“ *exists necessarily, is needful to the Existence of any*

The Third LETTER.

“ other Thing, as a *fine quâ non* in the Sense Space
“ is necessary to every Thing: Which is proved (you
“ say) by *This Consideration*, that Space is a Property
“ of the Self-existent Substance; and, being both Ne-
“ cessary in itself, and needful to the Existence of
“ every Thing else, consequently the Substance, of which
“ it is a Property, must be so too. Space, I own, is
“ in one Sense a Property of the Self-existent Sub-
“ stance; but, in the same Sense, 'tis also a Property
“ of all other Substances. The only Difference is
“ in Respect to the Quantity. And, since every
“ Part of Space, as well as the *Whole*, is necessa-
“ ry, every Substance consequently must be Self-
“ existent, because it hath this *Self-existent Pro-*
“ *perty*. Which since you will not admit for true,
“ if it directly follows from your Arguments, they
“ cannot be conclusive.

“ What you say under the *first* Head proves
“ (I think) to a very great *Probability*, though not
“ to Me with the Evidence of *Demonstration*: But
“ your Arguments under the *Second* I am not able
“ to see the Force of.

“ I am so far from being pleased that I can form
“ Objections to your Arguments, that, besides
“ the *Satisfaction* it would have given me in my
“ own Mind, I should have thought it an *Honour*
“ to have entered into your Reasonings, and seen
“ the Force of them. I cannot desire to trespass
“ any more upon your better employed Time; so
“ shall only add my hearty Thanks for your
“ Trouble on my Account, and that I am with
“ the greatest Respect,”

Reverend Sir,

Your most obliged humble Servant.

Dec. the 5th,

1713.

The

The ANSWER

TO THE

Third LETTER.

S I R,

THOUGH, when I turn my Thoughts every Way, I tully persuade myself there is no Defect in the *Argument itself*; yet in my *Manner of Expression* I am satisfied there must be some Want of Clearness, when there remains any Difficulty to a Person of your Abilities and Sagacity. I did not mean that your saying a necessary Being exists *Somewhere* does necessarily suppose it to be *finite*; but that the *Manner of Expression* is apt to excite in the Mind an Idea of a *Finite Being*, at the same Time that you are thinking of a *Necessary Being*, without accurately attending to the *Nature of That Necessity* by which it exists. Necessity *absolute*, and *antecedent* (in order of Nature) to the Existence of Any Subject, has nothing to *limit* it; but, if it operates at all, (as it must needs do,) it must *operate* (if I may so speak) *every-where* and *at all Times* alike. Determination of a particular Quantity, or particular Time or Place of Existence of any Thing, cannot arise but from somewhat *external* to the Thing itself. For Example: Why there should exist just such a small determinate Quantity of *Matter*, neither *more* nor *less*, interspersed in the immense Vacuities of Space, no Reason can be given: Nor can there be any Thing in Nature, which could have *determined* a Thing so indifferent in itself, as is the *Measure of that Quantity*, but only the *Will* of an *intelligent* and *free Agent*. To suppose *Matter*, or any Other Substance, *Necessarily-existing* in a *Finite determinate Quantity*; in an Inch cube, for Instance; or in Any cer-
tain

The ANSWER to the Third LETTER.

tain Number of Cube-Inches, and *no more*; is exactly the same Absurdity, as supposing it to exist *Necessarily*, and yet for a *Finite Duration* only: Which every one sees to be a plain Contradiction. The Argument is likewise the same, in the Question about the Original of *Motion*. *Motion* cannot be *necessarily-existing*; because, it being evident that *All Determinations* of Motion are *equally possible* in themselves, the Original *Determination* of the Motion of any particular Body *this Way*, rather than the *contrary Way*, *could not* be *necessarily in itself*, but was either caused by the *Will* of an *Intelligent* and *Free Agent*, or else was an *Effect* produced and determined without *Any Cause at all*; which is an express Contradiction: As I have shewn in my *Demonstration of the Being and Attributes of God*, Page 14, [Edit. 4th and 5th.] Page 12, [Edit. 6th.]

To the *Second Head* of Argument I answer, *Space*, is a Property [or *Mode*] of the Self-existent Substance, but not of any other Substances. All other Substances are *IN Space*, and are *penetrated by it*; but the Self-existent Substance is not *IN Space*, nor *penetrated by it*, but is itself (if I may so speak) the *Substratum* of *Space*, the *Ground* of the Existence of *Space* and *Duration itself*. Which [*Space and Duration*] being evidently *necessary*, and yet *Themselves not Substances*, but *Properties or Modes*, shew evidently that the *Substance*, without which these *Properties* could not subsist, is itself *much more* (if that were possible) *Necessary*. And as *Space* and *Duration* are *needful* (i. e. *ſine quâ non*,) to the Existence of *every Thing else*; so consequently is the *Substance*, to which *These Properties* belong in *that peculiar Manner* which I before mentioned.

I am, Sir,

Decem. 10, Your affectionate Friend and Servant.

1713.

THE

T H E

Fourth L E T T E R.

Reverend Sir,

“ **W**Hatever is the Occasion of my not seeing
“ the Force of your Reasonings, I cannot
“ impute it to (what *you* do) the Want of *Clear-*
“ *ness* in your Expression. I am too well acquaint-
“ ed with myself, to think *my not understanding*
“ an Argument a sufficient Reason to conclude
“ that it's either improperly expressed, or not con-
“ clusive, unless I can clearly *shew* the *Defect* of
“ it. 'Tis with the greatest Satisfaction I must
“ tell you, that, the more I reflect on your *first*
“ Argument, the more I am convinced of the
“ Truth of it; and it now seems to me altogether
“ unreasonable to suppose *Absolute Necessity* can
“ have any Relation to *one Part* of Space more
“ than to *Another*; and if so, an *Absolutely-necessary*
“ *Being* must exist *every-where*.

“ I wish I was as well satisfied in Respect to the
“ *other*. You say, *all Substances, except the Self-*
“ *existent one, are In Space, and are penetrated by*
“ *it*. All Substances doubtless, whether Body or
“ Spirit, exist *in Space*: But when I say that a
“ *Spirit* exists in *Space*, were I put upon telling
“ my Meaning, I know not how I could do it
“ any other Way than by saying, such a particular
“ Quantity of Space terminates the *Capacity of act-*
“ *ing* in finite Spirits *at one and the same Time*; so
“ that they cannot act beyond that determined
“ Quantity. Not but that I think there is *some-*
“ *what* in the Manner of Existence of Spirits in
“ Respect

The Fourth LETTER.

“ Respect of *Space*, that *more directly Answers* to
“ the Manner of the Existence of *Body*; but *what*
“ *That is*, or of the Manner of their Existence, I
“ cannot possibly form an Idea. And it seems (if
“ possible) much *more* difficult to determine what
“ Relation the *Self-existent Being* hath to *Space*. To
“ say he exists *In Space*, after the *same Manner* that
“ *other Substances* do, (somewhat like which I
“ too rashly asserted in my last) perhaps would be
“ placing the *Creator* too much on a Level with
“ the *Creature*, or, however, it is not *plainly and*
“ *evidently true*: And to say the Self-existent Sub-
“ stance is the *Substratum* of *Space*, in the *common*
“ *Sense* of the Word, is scarce intelligible, or at
“ least is not evident. Now, tho’ there may be
“ an hundred Relations *distinct* from *either* of these,
“ yet, how we should come by *Ideas* of them, I
“ cannot conceive. We may indeed have *Ideas* to
“ *the Words*, and not altogether depart from the
“ common *Sense* of them, when we say the Self-
“ existent Substance is the *Substratum* of *Space*, or
“ *the Ground* of its Existence: But I see no Rea-
“ son to think it *True*, because *Space* seems to me
“ to be as *absolutely Self-existent*, as ’tis possible any
“ Thing *can* be: So that, make what *other* Sup-
“ position you please, yet we cannot help sup-
“ posing *Immense Space*; because there must be
“ either an *Infinity of Being*, or (if you’ll allow the
“ Expression) an *Infinite Vacuity of Being*. Perhaps
“ it may be objected to this, that, tho’ *Space* is
“ really Necessary, yet the *Reason* of its being Ne-
“ cessary is its being a *Property* of the Self-existent
“ Substance; and that, *It* being so *evidently Ne-*
“ *cessary*, and its *Dependence on the Self-existent Sub-*
“ *stance* not so evident, we are ready to conclude
“ it *absolutely Self-existent*, as well as *necessary*; and
“ that this is the Reason why the *Idea of Space*
“ forces itself on our Minds, antecedent to, and
“ exclusive

The Fourth LETTER.

“ exclusive of (as to the Ground of its Existence)
“ all other Things. Now this, though it is really
“ an *Objection*, yet is no direct *Answer* to what I
“ have said; because it *supposes* the only Thing to
“ be *proved*, viz. that the *Reason* why Space is ne-
“ cessary is its being a *Property* of a Self-existent
“ Substance. And supposing it *not to be evident*,
“ that Space is *absolutely Self-existent*; yet, while
“ it is *doubtful*, we cannot argue as though the
“ contrary were *certain*, and we were *sure* that
“ Space was only a *Property* of the Self-existent
“ Substance. But now, if Space be not *absolutely*
“ *Independent*, I don't see what we can conclude
“ is so: For 'tis manifestly *Necessary Itself*, as well
“ as *antecedently needful* to the Existence of all
“ other Things, not excepting (as I think) even
“ the Self-existent Substance.

“ All your Consequences, I see, follow demon-
“ strably from your Supposition; and, were *That*
“ evident, I believe it would serve to prove several
“ other Things as well as what you bring it for.
“ Upon which Account, I should be extremely
“ pleased to see it proved by any one. For, as I
“ design the Search after Truth as the Business of
“ my Life, I shall not be ashamed to learn from
“ any Person; though, at the same Time, I can't
“ but be sensible, that Instruction from some
“ Men is like the Gift of a Prince, it reflects an
“ Honour on the Person on whom it lays an
“ Obligation.”

I am,

Reverend Sir,

Your obliged Servant.

Dec. 16, 1713.

T H E

THE
ANSWER

TO THE

Fourth LETTER.

S I R,

MY being out of Town most Part of the Month of *January*, and some other accidental Avocations, hindered me from answering your Letter sooner. The Sum of the Difficulties it contains is (I think) this : That 'tis difficult to determine what Relation the Self-existent Substance has to Space : That to say It is the Substratum of Space, in the common Sense of the Word, is scarce intelligible, or, at least, is not evident : That Space seems to be as Absolutely Self-existent, as 'tis possible any Thing can be : And that, its being a Property of the Self-existent Substance is Supposing the Thing that was to be Proved. This is entering indeed into the very Bottom of the Matter, and I will endeavour to give you as brief and clear an Answer as I can.

That the Self-Existent Substance is the *Substratum* of Space, or Space a Property of the Self-Existent Substance, are not perhaps very proper Expressions, nor is it easy to find such. But what I mean is This : The Idea of Space (as also of Time or Duration) is an Abstract or Partial Idea ; An Idea of a certain Quality or Relation, which

we

The ANSWER to the Fourth LETTER.

we evidently see to be *Necessarily-existing*; and yet which, (not being itself a *Substance*) at the same Time, necessarily *presupposes* a *Substance*, without which it could not exist; Which *Substance*, consequently, must be itself (much more, if possible) *Necessarily-existing*. I know not how to explain this so well as by the following Similitude: A *Blind Man*, when he tries to frame to himself the *Idea* of *Body*, his *Idea* is nothing but That of *Hardness*. A Man that had *Eyes*, but no Power of *Motion*, or Sense of *Feeling* at all, when he tried to frame to himself the *Idea* of *Body*, his *Idea* would be nothing but that of *Colour*. Now, as in these Cases, *Hardness* is not *Body*, and *Colour* is not *Body*; but yet, to the Understanding of these Persons, those Properties necessarily *infer* the Being of a *Substance*, of *which Substance itself* the Persons have no *Idea*: So *Space* to Us is not itself *Substance*, but it necessarily *infers* the Being of a *Substance*, which affects none of our *present Senses*; And, being *itself Necessary*, it follows, that the *Substance*, which it *infers*, is (much more) *Necessary*.

I am, Sir,

Your affectionate Friend

Jan. 29. and Servant.

1713.

T H E
Fifth LETTER.

Reverend Sir,

“ YOU have very comprehensively expressed;
“ in six or seven Lines, all the Difficulties of
“ my Letter; which I should have endeavoured
“ to have made shorter, had I not been afraid an
“ improper Expression might possibly occasion a
“ Mistake of my Meaning. I am very glad the
“ Debate is come into so narrow a Compass; For
“ I think now it intirely turns upon this, whether
“ our *Ideas* of *Space* and *Duration* are *partial*, so
“ as to *presuppose* the Existence of some other
“ Thing. Your Similitude of the Blind Man is
“ very *apt*, to explain your Meaning (which, I
“ think, I fully understand) but does not seem to
“ come intirely up to the Matter. For what is the
“ Reason that the Blind Man concludes there must
“ be *Somewhat external*, to give him that Idea of
“ *Hardness*? 'Tis because he supposes it impossible
“ for him to be thus affected, unless there were
“ some Cause of it; which Cause, should it be re-
“ moved, the Effect would immediately cease too,
“ and he would no more have the Idea of *Hardness*,
“ but by Remembrance. Now to apply this to
“ the Instance of *Space* and *Duration*: Since a Man,
“ from his having these *Ideas*, very justly concludes
“ that there must be *somewhat External*, which is
“ the Cause of them; consequently, should This
“ Cause (whatever it is) be taken away, his Ideas
“ would

The Fifth L E T T E R.

“ would be so too : Therefore, if *what is supposed*
“ *to be the Cause* be removed, and yet the *Idea* re-
“ mains, *That Supposed Cause* cannot be the *Real*
“ *one*. Now, granting the Self-Existent Substance
“ to be the *Substratum* of these Ideas, could we
“ make the *Supposition* of its *ceasing to be*, yet Space
“ and Duration would still *remain unaltered* : Which
“ seems to shew, that the Self-Existent Substance
“ is not the *Substratum* of *Space and Duration*.
“ Nor would it be an Answer to the Difficulty
“ to say that *every Property* of the Self-Existent
“ Substance is *as necessary* as the *Substance itself* ;
“ since *That* will only hold, *While the Substance*
“ *itself exists* : For there's implied, in the Idea of a
“ *Property*, an Impossibility of Subsisting without
“ its *Substratum*. I grant the *Supposition* is *absurd* :
“ But how otherwise can we know whether any
“ Thing be a *Property* of such a Substance, but by
“ examining whether it would *cease to be*, if its
“ supposed Substance should do so ? Notwithstand-
“ ing what I have now said, I cannot say that I
“ believe your Argument *not conclusive* ; for I must
“ own my Ignorance, that I am really at a Loss
“ about the Nature of *Space and Duration*. But,
“ did it plainly appear that they were *Properties* of
“ a *Substance*, we should have an *easy Way* with
“ the Atheists : For it would at once prove de-
“ monstrably an *Eternal, Necessary, Self-existent*
“ *Being* ; that there is *but One* such ; and that he
“ is *needful* in order to the Existence of all other
“ Things. Which makes me think, that, tho' it
“ may be *true*, yet 'tis not *obvious* to every Capa-
“ city : Otherwise it would have been generally
“ used, as a fundamental Argument to prove the
“ Being of God.

“ I must add one Thing more, that your Ar-
“ gument for the *Omnipresence* of God seemed
“ *always* to me *very probable*. But, being very

The Fifth L E T T E R.

“ desirous to have it appear *demonstrably* conclusive,
“ I was sometimes forced to say what was *not* alto-
“ gether *my Opinion*: Not that I did this for the
“ Sake of *Disputing*, (for besides the particular Dis-
“ agreeableness of this to my own Temper, I
“ should surely have chosen another Person to
“ have trifled with;) but I did it to set off the
“ Objection to Advantage, that it might be more
“ fully answered. I heartily wish you as *fair*
“ *Treatment* from your Opponents in Print, as I
“ have had from *you*: Tho’, I must own, I can-
“ not see, in those that I have read, That unpre-
“ judiced Search after Truth, which I would have
“ hoped for.”

I am, Reverend Sir,

Your most humble Servant.

Feb. 3, 1713.



T H E
A N S W E R

T O T H E

Fifth L E T T E R.

S I R,

I N a Multitude of Business, I mislaid your last Letter, and could not answer it till it came again to my Hands by Chance. We seem to have pushed the Matter in Question between us as far as it will go; and, upon the Whole, I cannot but take Notice I have very seldom met with Persons so reasonable and unprejudiced as yourself in such Debates as these.

I think all I need say, in Answer to the *Reasoning* in your Letter, is, that your granting the *Absurdity* of the *Supposition* you were endeavouring to make, is, consequently, granting the *necessary Truth* of my *Argument*. If * *Space* and *Duration* necessarily remain, even after they are *supposed* to be *taken away*; and be not (as 'tis plain they are not) *Themselves Substances*; then the † *Substance*, on whose Existence they depend, will necessarily remain likewise, even after it is *supposed* to be *taken away*: Which shews *That Supposition* to be *impossible* and *contradictory*.

H h 2

As

* Ut Partium Temporis Ordo est immutabilis, sic etiam Ordo Partium Spatii. Moveantur hæ de locis suis, & movebuntur (ut ita dicam) de seipsis. NEWTON. Princip. Mathemat. Schol. ad Definit. 8.

† Deus non est Æternitas vel Infinitas, sed æternus & infinitus; non est Duratio vel Spatium, sed Durat & Adest. Durat semper, & Adstet ubique; & existendo semper & ubique, Durationem & Spati-

-icbi-

-icpi-

-icdi-

-icbi-

The ANSWER to the Fifth LETTER.

am, Aeternitatem & Infinitatem, constituit. Cum unaquæq; Spatii Particula sit Semper; & unumquodq; Durationis indivisibile Momentum Ubique; certè rerum omnium Fabricator ac Dominus non erit Nunquam Nusquam. Omnipræiens est, non per Virtutem solam, sed etiam per Substantiam: nam Virtus sine Substantia subsistere non potest. In ipso continentur & moventur Universa, &c. NEWTON. Princip. Mathematic. Schol. general. sub Finem.

|| Puto implicare Contradictionem, ut Mundus [meaning the Material World] sit Finitus. Cartes. Epist. 69. Partis primæ.

As to your Observation at the End of your Letter, that the Argument I have insisted on, if it were *obvious* to every Capacity, should have more frequently been used as a Fundamental Argument for a Proof of the Being of God: The *True Cause* why it has been *seldom* urged, is, I think, This, That the universal Prevalency of *Cartes's* absurd Notions (teaching that || *Matter* is necessarily Infinite and necessarily Eternal, and ascribing all Things to mere *Mechanic* Laws of *Motion*, exclusive of final Causes, and of all *Will* and *Intelligence* and *Divine Providence* from the *Government* of the World) hath incredibly blinded the Eyes of *Common Reason*, and prevented Men from discerning *Him* in whom they live, and move, and have their Being. The like has happened in some *Other* Instances. How universally have Men for many Ages believed, that *Eternity* is no *Duration* at all, and *Infinity* no *Amplitude*? Something of the like Kind has happened in the Matter of *Transubstantiation*, and (I think) in the Scholastic Notion of the *Trinity*, &c.

I am, Sir,

Your affectionate Friend and Servant.

*April 8,
1713.*

THE
ANSWER

TO A

Sixth LETTER;

Being Part of a

LETTER writ to *Another* Gentleman,
who had proposed several of the
same Objections with the foregoing.

S I R,

YOU will give me Leave, without any Preface or Apology, to propose directly the best Answer I can to the Objections your have offered.

There are but *Two* Ways, by which the *Being*, and *All* or *Any* of the *Attributes* of *God*, can possibly be proved: The one *a priori*, the other *a posteriori*.

The Proof *a posteriori* † is level to *All* Mens Capacities: Because there is an endless Gradation of wise and useful Phænomena of Nature, from the most obvious to the most abstruse; which afford (at least

The ANSWER to the Sixth LETTER.

on of the World are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his Eternal Power and Godhead.

least a *moral and reasonable*) Proof of the Being of God, to the *several Capacities* of *All unprejudiced* Men, who have any Probity of Mind. And this is what (I suppose) God expects (as a *Moral Governor*) that *Moral Agents* should be determined by.

The Proof *a priori* is (I fully believe) strictly *demonstrative*; but (like numberless *Mathematical Demonstrations*) capable of being understood by only a *few attentive Minds*; because it is of Use, only against *Learned and Metaphysical Difficulties*. And therefore it must never be expected, that this should be made obvious to the *Generality* of Men, any more than *Astronomy* or *Mathematicks* can be.

This being premised in general, I proceed to Particulars.

Concerning the Notion of *Self-Existence*, I explain myself thus: Of every Thing that *Is*, there is a *Reason* which now does, or Once or Always did, *determine* the *Existence* rather than the *Non-existence* of that Thing. Of That which derives not its Being from Any Other Thing, this *Reason* or *Ground* of Existence (whether we can attain to any *Idea* of it, or no) *must* be *In* the Thing itself. For though the bare Proof by Ratiocination, that *there cannot but exist such a Being*, does *not* indeed give us any distinct *Notion* of *Self-Existence*, but only shews the *Certainty* of the Thing: yet when once a Thing is known, by reasoning *à posteriori*, to be *Certain*; it *unavoidably follows* that there *Is in Nature* a Reason *a priori* (whether we can discover it or no) of the Existence of That which we know cannot but exist. Since therefore, in that which derives not its Being from any Other Thing, the *Ground* or *Reason why* it *exists*, rather than *not exists*, must be *in* the Thing itself; and it is a plain Contradiction to suppose its own *Will*,
by

The ANSWER to the Sixth LETTER.

by Way of *efficient Cause*, to be the Reason of its Existence; it remains that *absolute Necessity* (the same Necessity that is the Cause of the unalterable *Proportion* between 2 and 4) be, by Way of *Formal Cause*, the Ground of That Existence. And this Necessity is indeed *antecedent*, though not in *Time*, yet in the *Order of Nature*, to the *Existence* of the Being itself: Whereas, on the contrary, its own *Will* is, in the *Order of Nature*, *subsequent* to the Supposition of the Existence of the Being, and therefore cannot be the *formal Cause* of that Existence.

Nothing can be more *absurd*, than to suppose that any Thing (or any Circumstance of any Thing) is, and yet that there be absolutely *no Reason Why* it *Is*, rather than *not*. 'Tis easy to conceive, that *We* may indeed be utterly ignorant of the *Reasons*, or *Grounds*, or *Causes* of many Things. But that any Thing *is*; and that there is a *real Reason* in Nature *why* it is, rather than *is not*; these two are as necessarily and essentially connected, as any two *Correlates* whatever, as *Height* and *Depth*, &c.

The Scholastic Way of proving the Existence of the Self-existent Being, from the *absolute Perfection* of his Nature; is *ὅτι παντός*. For *All* or *Any Perfections* presuppose Existence; Which is *Petitio Principii*. But *bare Necessity of Existence* does not presuppose, but infer Existence. That which exists by *absolute Necessity of Nature*, will always (whether you will or no) be *supposed* or *included* in any possible Idea of Things, even where you never so expressly endeavour to exclude it: Just as the *Proportion* between 2 and 4 remains included in the very Terms, wherein any Man would endeavour expressly to deny it.

To exist at all, and to exist every-where, are one and the very same Thing, where the Cause or
H h 4 Ground

The ANSWER to the Sixth LETTER,

Ground of the Existence is not either *confined to*, or *operates only in*, some particular Place. For 2 and 4 to have *at all* a certain Proportion to each other, and to have That same Proportion *everywhere*, is the very same Thing. And the like is true, of every Thing that is *necessary in itself*. To suppose (as you suggest) that the Self-existent may be *limited* by its *own Nature*, is *presupposing* a *Nature* or *limiting Quality*: Whereas, in this Case, here must nothing be presupposed; no *Nature*, no *Quality* whatsoever, but what *arises* (and consequently *everywhere alike*) from a *Necessity absolute in itself*, and antecedent (in the Order of our Ideas) to any *Nature, Place, Quality, Time, or Thing* whatsoever.

When I say, that *Necessity, absolutely such in itself, has no Relation to Time or Place*: My Meaning is, that it has no Relation to, or Dependence upon, any *particular Time or Place*, or *any Thing in any particular Time or Place*; but that it is the *Same in All Time, and in All Place*. What you mean by *Time* and *Place* being *finite*, I understand not. The Schoolmens Notion of *Time's* depending on the *Motions* or *Existence* of the Material World is as *Senseless*, as the supposing it to depend on the *Turning* or *not Turning* of an *Hour-glass*. The same also is true of *Place*.

Infinite *Space* is infinite *Extension*; and *Eternity* is infinite *Duration*. They are the Two first and most obvious and simple Ideas, that every Man has in his Mind. *Time* and *Place* are the *sine quâ non* of all other *Things*, and of all other *Ideas*. To suppose Either of them *Finite* is an express *Contradiction* in the Idea itself. No Man *does* or *can* possibly *imagine* Either of them to be *finite*; but only, either by *Non-attention*, or by *Choice*, he attends perhaps to *Part* of his Idea, and *forbears attending to the Remainder*. All the Difficulty that
has

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has ever arisen about this Matter, is nothing but *Dust* thrown by Mens using *Words* (or rather *Sounds only*) in their Philosophy, instead of *Ideas*. And the Arguments drawn from the *Jargon* of the Schoolmen will equally prove every *Axiom* in *Euclid* to be *uncertain* and *unintelligible*.

They who remove the Idea of *Infinity* (or of a *Being* whose Attribute *Infinity* is) by supposing *Space* to be nothing but a *Relation between two Bodies*, are guilty of the *Absurdity* of supposing That, which is *Nothing*, to have *real Qualities*. For the *Space* which is between two *Bodies* is always unalterably just what it was; and has the very same *Dimensions, Quantity, and Figure*; whether *These*, or any other *Bodies*, be there, or any-where else, or not at all: Just as *Time or Duration* is the * same, whether you turn your *Hour-Glass* or no, or whether the *Sun* moves, or stands still, or whether there was or was not any *Sun*, or any *Material World* at all.

* Eadem est *Duratio* seu *Perseverantia*. *Existentiæ* *Rerum*, sive *Motus* sint *celeres*, sive *tardi*, sive *nulli*. NEWTON. *Princip. Mathem. Schol. ad Definit. 8.*

The Schoolmens Distinctions about *Spirits* existing in *Ubi*, and not in *Loco*, are mere empty *Sounds*, without any Manner of *Signification*.

To set *Bounds* to *Space* is to suppose it bounded by something which itself takes up *Space*; and That's a *Contradiction*: Or else that 'tis bounded by *Nothing*; and then the Idea of *That Nothing* will still be *Space*; which is another *Contradiction*. *Beings* which exist in *Time* and in *Space* (as every *finite Thing* must needs do) presuppose *Time* and *Space*: But *That Being*, whose Existence makes *Duration* and *Space*, must be *infinite* and *eternal*, because *Duration* and *Space* can have no *Bounds*. Not that *Duration* and *Space* are the *Formal Cause* of *That Existence*; but that necessary Attributes do

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do necessarily and inseparably infer, or shew to us, a Necessary Substance; of which Substance itself we have no Image, because 'tis the Object of none of our Senses: But we perceive its Existence by its Effects, and the Necessity of that Existence by the Necessity of certain Attributes, and by other Arguments of Reason and Inference. To suppose Space removed, destroyed, or taken away, amounts to the absurd Supposition of removing a Thing away from itself; that is, If in your Imagination you annihilate the Whole of Infinite Space, the Whole Infinite Space will still remain; and, if you annihilate any Part of it, That Part will still necessarily remain, as appears by the unmoved Situation of the Rest. And to suppose it divided or divisible amounts to the same Contradiction.

The Objection, of Immensity being inconsistent with Spirituality and Simplicity, arises merely from the Jargon of the Schoolmen, who (in order to help out Transubstantiation) have used themselves to speak of This, and of many other Things, in Phrases which had no Meaning or Ideas belonging to them. By denying the real Immensity and the real Eternal Duration of God, they, in true Consequence, (though 'tis reasonable to suppose they saw not That Consequence) denied his Being. The Immensity of Space (it being throughout absolutely uniform and essentially indivisible) is no more inconsistent with Simplicity, than the uniform successive Flowing of the Parts of Duration (as you most rightly observe) are inconsistent with Simplicity. There is no Difficulty at all in this Point, but a mere Prejudice, and False Notion of Simplicity.

As to Spirituality: The individual Consciousness of the One Immense Being is at truly One, as the present Moment of Time is individually One, in all Places at once. And the One can no more properly

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properly be said to be an *Ell* or a *Mile* of *Consciousness* (which is the Sum of your Objection) than the other can be said to be an *Ell* or *Mile* of *Time*. This Suggestion seems to deserve particular Consideration.

To the Objection, that the supposing God to be really and *substantially* Omnipresent is supposing him to be *the Soul of the World*, I answer, This is a great Mistake: For the Word *Soul* signifies a *Part* of a *Whole*, whereof *Body* is the *Other Part*; And they, being united, *mutually affect* each other, as *Parts* of the same *Whole*. But God is present to every Part of the Universe, not as a *Soul*, but as a *Governor*; so as to *act upon* every Thing in what Manner he pleases, himself being *acted upon* by Nothing.

What you suggest about *Space* having *no Parts*, because 'tis *Infinite*, is a mere *Quibble* indeed, and has nothing in it. The Meaning of *Parts* (in Questions of this Nature) is *separable, compounded, un-united Parts*, such as are the *Parts of Matter*: Which, for that Reason, is always a *compound*, not a *simple Substance*. No *Matter* is *One Substance*, but a *Heap of Substances*. And *That* I take to be the Reason why *Matter* is a Subject *incapable of Thought*. Not because 'tis *extended*, but because its *Parts* are *distinct Substances, un-united, and independent on each other*: Which (I believe) is not the Case of *Other Substances*. The *Kinds of Substance* may perhaps be *More*, and more *different* from each other, than we (at *present*) for Want of *more Senses*, are aware of. *Matter* and *Spirit* is no other Division than *Matter* and *not-Matter*: Just as if one should divide the Species of Animals into *Horses* and *not-Horses*.

As to the Question, why *Absolute Necessity* will not admit of the Existence of *Two distinct Independent Beings*, as well as of *different Attributes and Properties*

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Properties in One Independent Being; I answer, Absolute Necessity, in which there is no where any Variation, cannot be the Ground of Existence of a Number of Finite Beings, however agreeing and harmonious, because That (viz. Number, or Finiteness) is itself a manifest Difformity or Inequality: But it may be the Ground or Existence of One Uniform infinite Being. The different Attributes of which One Uniform Being are not a Variety of Parts, or an un Uniformness (if I may so speak) of the Necessity by which it exists; but they are All and each of them Attributes of the Whole, Attributes of the One simple infinite Being: Just as the Powers of Hearing and Seeing are not Inequalities or Difformities in the Soul of Man, but each of them Powers of the Whole Soul.

As to the *Last* Argument you refer to, my Meaning therein is this, that 'tis a Contradiction to suppose *Two* (or *More*) necessarily-existent Beings; because *Each* of them, by the *Supposition*, being independent, and *sufficient* to itself, tho' the *Other* were supposed *not to exist*, they thereby, *Each* of them, mutually destroy the *supposed Necessity* of the *Others* Existence, and consequently *Neither* of them indeed will be *necessary* or *independent*. For Instance, If *Matter*, or *Spirit*, or any *Other Substance*, could as possibly be conceived to exist without *That in which they all exist*, as *That in which they all exist* can be conceived to exist without *Them*, then there would be *necessary-Existence* on *Neither* Part.

As to the Question concerning the possible *Plurality* of *Infinities*; 'Tis certainly true that the Infinity of Space neither excludes *finite Bodies* nor *finite Spirits*, nor *infinite Body*, nor *infinite Spirit*: But it excludes every Thing of the *same Kind*, whether *finite* or *infinite*; which is all that my Argument requires. There can be but *One Infinite Space*, and but *One Infinite Time*, and but *One Infinite Spirit*,

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Spirit, (taking *Spirit* to mean a particular *positive* distinct Substance, and not the mere negative *non-Matter*, of which there may be innumerable Kinds :) And, if *Matter* could be infinite, there could likewise be but *One infinite Body*, and so on : For *One Infinite* in all Dimensions exhausts always the whole Possibility of *That Kind*, though it excludes not Others.

The *Ubi* of *Spirits* being their *Perception* only, and the *Omnipresence* of God being his *infinite Knowledge* only, are mere Words, without *any Sense* at all. And, by the like Confusion, *any Thing* may be said to be *any Things*, and we have in us no Principles of Knowledge at all, nor any Use either of Words or Ideas.

I am, Sir,

Your assured Friend

and Servant, &c.

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THE
ANSWER

TO A
Seventh LETTER,

Concerning the ARGUMENT *a priori*.

*To the Reverend Dr. * * **

—YOUR Objection against arguing at all *a priori*, concerning the Existence and Perfections of the *First Cause*, is what many Learned Men have indeed stuck at: And, it being evident that Nothing can be *prior* to the *First Cause*, they have therefore thought it sufficient to say, that the *First Cause* exists “*absolutely without Cause* ;” and that therefore there can be no such Thing as Reasoning or Arguing about it *a priori* at all. But, if you attend carefully, you will find This Way of Speaking to be by no Means satisfactory. For though 'tis indeed most evident, that no Thing, no Being, can be *prior* to That Being, which is the *First Cause* and Original of all Things; yet there must be in Nature a Ground or Reason, a permanent Ground or Reason, of the Existence of the *First Cause*; otherwise its Existence would be owing to, and depend upon, mere Chance. And all that could be said upon This Head would amount

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amount to *This* only, That it exists, *because* it exists; that it *therefore* does and always did exist, *because* it does and always did exist. Which the Followers of *Spinoza* will, with equal Strength of Reason, affirm concerning *every Substance* that exists *at all*.

If the Idea of an *Eternal* and *
Infinite Nothing were a possible Idea,
and not *contradictory* in itself, the
Existence of the *First Cause* would
not be *necessary*: (For *Necessity of*
being, and *Possibility of not being*,
are *contradictory* Ideas.) And, if
the *Existence* of the *First Cause*
was not *necessary*, it would be no

* *Nothing* is That of which
every Thing can truly be denied,
and no *Thing* can truly be af-
firmed. So that the Idea of
Nothing (if I may so speak)
is absolutely the *Negation of All*
Ideas. The Idea, therefore,
either of a *Finite* or *Infinite*
Nothing, is a *Contradiction*
in Terms.

Contradiction to suppose it either *not to have existed*
in Time past, or to *cease to exist* at any Time to
come. The *Existence*, therefore, of the *First Cause*,
is *Necessary*: *Necessary absolutely*, and *in itself*. And,
therefore, *That Necessity* is, *a priori*, and in the
Order of Nature, the *Ground* or *Reason* of its Ex-
istence. For that, which exists *Necessarily*, or in
the Idea of which *Existence* and *Necessity* are *inse-*
parably and *necessarily Connected*, must either *there-*
fore be *necessary*, *because it exists*; or else it must
therefore exist, *because its Existence is Necessary*. If
it was *therefore* *necessary*, *because it existed*, then,
for the same Reason, *every Thing* that exists would
exist *necessarily*, and either *every Thing*, or *Nothing*,
would be the *First Cause*. On the contrary, if the
First Cause does *therefore* exist, *because its Existence*
is *Necessary*, then *Necessity* is the *Ground* or *Reason*
or *Foundation* of that Existence: And the *Exist-*
ence does not *infer* (that is, *a priori*, or in the
Order of Nature and *Consequence*, antecede) the
Necessity of Existing; but the *Necessity of existing*
does, on the contrary, *infer* (that is, *a priori*, or
in the *Order of Nature*, antecede) the *Supposition*
of

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of the *Existence*. Which is what I proposed to prove.

The Argument *a posteriori* is indeed by far the most generally useful Argument, most easy to be understood, and, in some Degree, suited to all Capacities; and therefore it ought always to be distinctly insisted upon. But forasmuch as Atheistical Writers have sometimes opposed the Being and Attributes of God by such *metaphysical* Reasonings as can no otherwise be obviated than by arguing *a priori*, therefore *This Manner of Arguing*, also, is *useful*, and *necessary* in its proper Place.

The *Eternity* of God can no otherwise be proved, than by considering *a priori* the Nature of a *Necessary* or *Self-Existent Cause*. The *Temporary Phænomena* of Nature prove indeed demonstrably *a posteriori*, that there is, and has been from the Beginning of those Phænomena, a Being of Power and Wisdom sufficient to produce and preserve those Phænomena. But that *This First Cause* has existed from *Eternity*, and shall exist to *Eternity*, cannot be proved from those *Temporary Phænomena*; but must be demonstrated from the intrinsic Nature of *Necessary Existence*. If the First Cause exists “*absolutely without any Ground or Reason of Existence*,” it might as possibly, in Times past, *without any Reason*, have not existed, and may as possibly, in Times to come, *without any Reason*, cease to exist. Can it be proved *a posteriori*, that the *First Cause* of all Things *will exist* Tomorrow? Or can it be proved any otherwise, than by shewing that *Necessity* is a certain Ground of *Future* as well as of *Present Existence*? And, if so, then the *Ground or Reason*, upon which the First Cause *now* does, and hereafter *always will*, and *cannot but exist*, is the very same *Ground or Reason* upon which he always *did exist*: And consequently it cannot with Truth be affirmed, that the First Cause exists “*absolutely without Any Ground*”

“Ground or Reason of Existence.” When Atheistical Writers affirm, that the *material Universe*, and every existing Substance in particular, was Eternal “*absolutely without any Ground or Reason of Existence;*” can This Assertion be confuted by Him, who shall himself affirm, that God was Eternal *absolutely without Any Ground or Reason of Existence?* Or can it be any other Way confuted at all, than by shewing, that Something must be *necessarily-existent*, (else nothing would ever have existed) and that *That* which is *necessarily-existent*, cannot possibly be either *Finite* or *Moveable*, or at any Time capable of Any Alterations, Limitations, Variations, Inequalities, or Diversifications whatsoever, either in *Whole*, or in *Part*, or in different Parts either of *Space* or *Time*?

In like Manner, the *Infinity*, or *Immensity*, or *Omnipresence* of God can no otherwise be proved, than by considering *a priori* the Nature of a *Necessary* or *Self-Existent* Cause. The *Finite* Phænomena of Nature prove, indeed, demonstrably *a posteriori*, that there is a Being which has *Extent* of *Power* and *Wisdom sufficient* to produce and preserve all these Phænomena. But that This *Author of Nature* is *Himself* absolutely *Immense* or *Infinite* cannot be proved from these *Finite* Phænomena, but must be demonstrated from the intrinsic Nature of *Necessary Existence*. If the First Cause exist “*absolutely without any Ground or Reason of Existence,*” it may as possibly be *Finite* as *Infinite*; it may as possibly be *Limited*, as be *Immense*. It may as possibly in *Other Places*, without any Reason, not exist, as it does, without any Reason, exist in *Those Places* where the *Phænomena of Nature* prove that it does exist. Can it be proved *a posteriori*, that *That Governing Wisdom and Power*, which the *Phænomena of Nature in this material World* demonstrate to be present *Here*, must therefore be *Immense*, *Infinite*, or *Omnipresent*? must be present likewise in those boundless

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boundless Spaces where we know of no *Phænomena* or *Effects* to prove its Existence? Or can the *Immen-*
sity and *Omnipresence* of the First Cause be at all
proved any other Way than by shewing, that *Ne-*
cessity of Existence is capable of no *Limitation*, but
must, for the same Reason, be the Ground of *Im-*
*men-*se or *Omnipresent Existence*, as 'tis the Ground or
Foundation of any Existence at all?

Again: The *Unity of God*, (which, I think, has
always been allowed to be a *Principle of Natural*
Religion; Otherwise St. Paul could not justly have
blamed the *Heathen* as *inexcusable*, in that *they did*
not like to retain God in their Knowledge, and that,
when they knew God, they glorified him not as God:
The *Unity of God* (I say) can no otherwise be de-
monstrated, than by considering *a priori* the Nature
of a *Necessary* or *Self-existent Cause*. The *Phæno-*
mena of Nature, which come within the Reach of
Our Observation, prove, indeed, demonstrably, that
there is a *Supreme Author and Director* of *That Na-*
ture, or of *Those Phænomena*, whereof we have any
Knowledge. But that *This Supreme Author and*
Governor of THIS NATURE, or of *THESE*
Phænomena, is likewise the *Supreme Author and Go-*
vernor of UNIVERSAL Nature, cannot be
proved by Us from our *partial* and *imperfect* Know-
ledge of a *Few Phænomena* in that *small Part* of the
Universe which comes within the Reach of Our
Senses, but must be demonstrated from the intrin-
sick Nature of *necessary Existence*. If the *First Cause*
exists “*absolutely without any Ground or Reason of Ex-*
istence,” 'tis altogether as possible, and as probable,
and as *reasonable* to suppose, that there may, without
any Reason, exist *numberless Finite independent co-*
existent First Causes (either of *like Nature and Substance*
to each other, or of *different Nature and Substance*
from each other) in *different Parts* of the immense
Universe, as that there should, without any Reason,
exist

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exist One only, Infinite, Immense, Omnipresent, First Cause, Author and Governor of the Whole.

That there is, and cannot but be, One, and One only, such First Cause, Author and Governor of the Universe, is (I conceive) capable of strict Demonstration, including That Part of the Argument which is deduced *a priori*. The Subject of the Question is no Trifle. If any sober-minded Man is persuaded he can find any Flaw in That Demonstration, or cares not to examine it, lest any of its Consequences should prove inconsistent with some other Notions he may perhaps through Prejudice have imbibed, I should be very Thankful to him to shew How the Unity of God (the First Principle of Natural Religion) can at all be proved by Reason *a posteriori* only.

Some such Considerations as these (I suppose) they were, or others of the like Nature, which moved Mr. Limborch to write thus to Mr. Locke: * *Argumentum desiderat Vir magnificus, quo probetur Ens, cujus existentia est necessaria, tantum posse esse Unum; & quidem ut id argumentum à necessitate existentiae desumatur, & a priori (ut in Scholis loquuntur) non a posteriori concludat; hoc est, ex naturâ necessariæ existentiae probetur, eam pluribus non posse esse communem.* * Locke's Familiar Letters, p. 409.
To which Mr. Locke replies: † *Les Theologiens, les Philosophes, & Descartes luy-meme supposent l'Unité de Dieu sans la Prouver.* † Ibid. p. 422, 423.
After which, having suggested his Own Thoughts, he thus concludes: *C'est là, selon moy, une Preuve a priori, que l'Etre éternel indépendant n'est qu'Un.*

To argue therefore *a priori* concerning the Existence and Attributes of the First Cause is no Absurdity. For, though No Thing, no Being, can indeed be prior to the First Cause, yet Arguments may, and must, be drawn from the Nature and Consequences of That Necessity by which the First Cause exists. Mathematical Necessary Truths are usually demonstrated

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demonstrated *a priori*, and yet nothing is *prior* to *Truths eternally necessary*. To confine therefore the *Use of the Term* to Argumentations about such Things only, as have Other Things *prior* to them in Time, is only *Quibbling* about the *Signification of Words*.

To the Objection, that an *Attribute* cannot be the *Ground* or *Reason of the Existence* of the *Substance itself*, which is always, on the contrary, the *Support* of the *Attributes*; I answer, that, in Strictness of Speech, *Necessity of Existence* is not an *Attribute*, in the *Sense* that *Attributes* are properly so styled; but 'tis [*Sui generis*] the *Ground* or *Foundation* of *Existence both of the Substance and of All the Attributes*. Thus, in Other Instances, *Immensity* is not an *Attribute*, in the *Sense* that *Wisdom*, *Power*, and the like, are strictly so called; but 'tis [*Sui generis*] a *Mode of Existence* both of the *Substance* and of *All the Attributes*. In like Manner, *Eternity* is not an *Attribute* or *Property*, in the *Sense* that other *Attributes*, inhering in the *Substance*, and supported by it, are properly so called; but 'tis [*Sui generis*] the *Duration of Existence* both of the *Substance*, and of *All the Attributes*. *Attributes* or *Properties*, strictly so called, cannot be *predicated* one of another. *Wisdom* cannot properly be said to be *Powerful*, or *Power* to be *Wise*. But *Immensity* is a *MODE* of *Existence* both of the *Divine Substance* and of *all the Attributes*. *Eternity* is the *DURATION* of *Existence*, both of the *Divine Substance*, and of *All the Attributes*. And *Necessity* is the *GROUND*, or *Reason*, or *Foundation of Existence* both of the *Divine Substance*, and of *All the Attributes*.

I am, Sir,

Your very humble Servant, &c.

Nr. 1074

Ausgang: 31. III. 1952

I. Schäden: a, b, d, e, f, m, n, p, r, s, u, x, y, z

II. Behandlung: 1, 2, 8, 8a, 9, 13, 16, 17, 25, 26, 40, 42

III. Besonderheiten:

Clarke, Samuel,

A Discourse concerning the Being and Attributes of God, the Obligations of
natural Religion

London 1767

Dogm. 218 e

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